

# Barnardos Residence

## Visit

(OPCAT monitoring)

### Te Poutama Ārahi Rangatahi – Secure Residence

Visit date: s9(2)(a) OIA 2020

Report date: 4 March 2021

Released under the Official Information Act 1982

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# Introduction

## Purpose of visit

The purpose of this visit was to fulfil the international monitoring mandate of the Office of the Children's Commissioner (OCC), to monitor the safety and wellbeing of children and young people detained in secure locked facilities. Between s 9(2)(a) OIA 2020, s 9(2)(a) OIA carried out an announced monitoring visit to Te Poutama Ārahi Rangatahi, Christchurch.

The Children's Commissioner is a National Preventive Mechanism (NPM) under the Crimes of Torture Act (1989)<sup>1</sup>. The role of OCC is to visit youth justice and care and protection residences to examine the conditions and treatment of children and young people, identify any improvements required or problems needing to be addressed, and make recommendations aimed at strengthening protections, improving treatment and conditions, and preventing ill treatment. For more information about the legislative context for our visits, see Appendix One.

## Context

Te Poutama Ārahi Rangatahi is a specialist residential therapeutic programme for youth who engage in s 9(2)(a) OIA. The residence is managed and operated by Barnardos, a national non-government organisation approved to deliver care services under section 396 of the Oranga Tamariki Act 1989. It has 12 beds, however the residence only provides eight beds under Barnardos' current contract with Oranga Tamariki. Since our last OPCAT visit in September 2019 there has been a change of Residence Manager and other changes to the leadership and clinical teams.

## Young people at Te Poutama Ārahi Rangatahi

At the time of our visit, there were six young people living at Te Poutama Ārahi Rangatahi. Their ages ranged from 14-17 years. Some of the young people had been in the residence for significant periods of time due to long delays in Oranga Tamariki securing community-based placements.

## Our monitoring processes

We were interested in hearing about the experiences of children and young people and we also wanted to understand the group dynamics at the residence. We used several methods to engage with children, young people and staff.

We conducted one-to-one interviews with children and young people who chose to talk with us. We also spent time observing children, young people and staff in the unit, including taking part in activities, sharing dinner and having conversations with children, young people and staff. This enabled us to see and experience after-school and evening routines.

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<sup>1</sup> This Act contains New Zealand's practical mechanisms under the United Nations Convention Against Torture and other Cruel, Inhuman, or Degrading Treatment or Punishment (OPCAT).

<https://www.occ.org.nz/our-work/monitoring/monitoring-work/why-we-monitor/>

As well as interviewing individual children and young people, we interviewed residence staff and external stakeholders, and reviewed relevant documentation.

For more information about our interviews and other information-gathering processes see Appendix Two.

### Our evaluation processes

In the past, the majority of our OPCAT reports have included a five or four-point scale. We used this scale to rate each OPCAT domain and to provide an overall rating for each residence.

We are currently reviewing our evaluation processes and are temporarily suspending the use of rating scales. Instead we will use key descriptors – harmful, poor, good and very good – to describe our overall findings in relation to:

- the treatment of young people at the residence
- the conditions at the residence

Our reports will also provide summaries of the strengths and areas for development according to each of the OPCAT domains.

The table below lists the new descriptors used in our findings, describing their impact and our expectations for further action. N.B. These descriptors are used in the context of the secure institutional residences which are intrinsically harmful for children and young people.<sup>2</sup>

<b>Finding</b>	<b>Impact for young people</b>	<b>OCC expectation</b>
Harmful	Treatment and/or conditions that are damaging or hurtful for children and young people	Must be urgently addressed
Poor	Treatment and/or conditions that are not sufficient to meet the needs of children and young people	Requires improvement in the near future
Good	Treatment and/or conditions that are sufficient to meet the needs of children and young people	Must be reviewed regularly to ensure the standard is maintained and improved if possible
Very good	Treatment and/or conditions that work well to meet the needs of children and young people	Should continue subject to effectiveness. May also be beneficial in other residential contexts

<sup>2</sup> Modernising Child, Youth and Family Expert Panel (2015). *Modernising Child Youth and Family. Expert Panel: Interim Report*. Wellington, New Zealand: Ministry of Social Development

# Overall findings and recommendations

## Overall findings

We identified five areas of practice as 'very good' because of their positive impact on young people's experiences. These areas of practice are:

- The commitment to monthly visits home where young people see their whānau rather than whānau being required to visit the residence. This is vital to maintaining, and at times, repairing or creating relationships with wider whānau
- The therapeutic model of care, which is embedded at all levels across the residence
- The creation of a youth-friendly magazine to inform young people and their whānau about the residence pre-admission
- The priority and commitment to providing all staff with professional supervision to ensure they are well supported and delivering optimal services to young people
- The high standard and comprehensive nature of young people's plans.

We found two key issues that must be urgently addressed. These issues were identified as 'harmful' and as having a significant impact on the safety and wellbeing of children and young people. The issues are:

- Young people remain at the residence for too long due to Oranga Tamariki failing to secure community placements
- The run-down physical environment of the residence, provided by Oranga Tamariki, which fails to provide a therapeutic, home-like environment for young people.

## Recommendations

We recommend the Chief Executive of Oranga Tamariki	
<b>Rec 1:</b>	Urgently finalises the plan for the closure of care and protection residences and provides full information about this plan to the Office of the Children's Commissioner.
<b>Rec 2:</b>	Engages with Barnardos about the future provision of specialised care for children and young people <b>s 9(2)(a) OIA</b> .
<b>Rec 3:</b>	Prioritises support and resources to enable whānau, hapū and iwi and wider family groups to care for, or determine care for, their children and young people.
<b>Rec 4:</b>	Ensures that children and young people and their whānau are central to all planning and decision-making in relation to future care placements.

## Oranga Tamariki National Office

### We recommend that the DCE Care Services works with Barnardos to:

<b>Rec 5:</b>	Provide sufficient funding to undertake redecoration of Te Poutama Ārahi Rangatahi immediately. This includes improvement to the aesthetics of the residence to make it appropriate and appealing for young people and as home-like as possible. (Ref. page 14)
<b>Rec 6:</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>a) Increase the responsiveness and involvement of Oranga Tamariki site social workers while young people are at the residence, particularly in relation to planning and transitions</li><li>b) Prioritise the identification and/or development of appropriate placements for young people. (Ref. page 9)</li></ul>

## Barnardos - Te Poutama Ārahi Rangatahi

### We recommend that the residence leadership team:

<b>Rec 7:</b>	Prioritises the development of a youth-friendly version of the Individual Care Plan. (Ref. page 9)
<b>Rec 8:</b>	Works to ensure that kaimahi Maori: <ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>a) Continue to be attracted to, employed and retained at the residence, and</li><li>b) Are recognised and valued for their contribution. (Ref. page 21)</li></ul>
<b>Rec 9:</b>	Seeks to understand the concerns young people have expressed regarding access to on-site gym equipment and comes up with solutions that safely address their needs and wishes. (Ref. page 13)

### Progress on previous recommendations

Of our recommendations from our OPCAT report of 6 December 2019, three had good progress and one had no progress. For further details, see Appendix Three.

## Domain 1: Treatment

*Our monitoring of the Treatment domain includes examination of the relationships between children and staff, models of therapeutic care and behaviour management, and the quality of planning and interventions tailored to individual children and young people's needs.*

### Findings from our last reports

In our last OPCAT report dated 6 December 2019 we said:

- The therapeutic care and treatment was comprehensive and tailored to the needs of young people
- There were strong relationships between staff and young people
- Young people had a say in the day-to-day running of the residence
- Young people experienced positive transitions from the residence as a result of Whakamana Mokopuna
- De-escalation techniques were valued by staff and used as alternatives to restraints
- Plans were not youth friendly and the young person's voice was not well integrated.

### Findings from this visit

#### Strengths

##### **Young people have strong relationships with staff**

Young people spoke positively about staff at the residence. They said they trust staff members and all had staff they could talk to if they were worried about anything. It was clear that young people highly valued these relationships and staff worked hard to build and maintain them.

During our visit, we observed warm, genuine interactions between young people and staff. Staff were attentive and responsive to the needs of young people. Each young person had a key worker who they spent significant one-on-one time with, both on and off-site.

##### **Force is rarely used**

We understand that young people are not often restrained at the residence. Instead, staff use de-escalation techniques and therapeutic interventions to help young people self-regulate. Young people told us they believe staff do not want to restrain them. They described staff using other ways to support them to self-regulate or to be safe, such as talking to them or moving them away from the group. The overall impact of these strategies upon children and young people was good.

Records show that when a restraint is used, there is comprehensive recording of the incident, including what occurred before, during and after the restraint. Staff are trained in Management of Actual or Potential Aggression (MAPA) and have regular refresher trainings.

### **There are spaces young people can use when they need time out**

We heard from young people and staff there are multiple places young people can go if they need some time away from the group, including a sensory room and the outside area. The residence has converted the time out room to a sensory room. This room has been created to assist young people to regulate their reactions to external stimuli. It contains multiple items young people can use to regulate themselves including sensory pillows, a blackboard and low lighting. Young people told us they also use their bedrooms to have 'quiet time' away from the group. They also talked about 'Room Six' where they could go and sleep if they felt unsafe in their own bedrooms. The existence of multiple spaces with different environments provides young people with good opportunities to choose the setting that best fits their needs.

*"They [staff] don't want to lay hands [restrain] on you [young people]."*

*"If a youth is feeling unsafe with someone or something in their rooms [is] making them feel unsafe, they have, can ask staff if they can go into Room Six for the night."*

### **Young people's plans are comprehensive, complete and regularly reviewed**

Each young person has a care plan, an education plan and an intervention plan. The plans we read during our visit were completed to a very good standard. Plans are reviewed monthly with the young person and all professionals involved. Staff told us having multiple professionals involved with young people's plans led to the responsibility for the plan being shared. Most young people knew they had a plan, understood what was in it and talked about going to review meetings. Whānau also received up to date copies of their young person's plan and this action was recorded on the plan.

### **The residence has an effective therapeutic model of care**

Embedded in the way the residence operates is a therapeutic model of care. As at our last visit, the s9(2)(a) OIA is used for working with young people at the residence. Residential youth workers receive regular training from the clinical team to ensure their therapeutic skills are up to date. A staff member described their role as "watching them [young people] heal and watching them grow". A number of staff commented on the restorative environment at Te Poutama Ārahi Rangatahi and the positive effect of this on young people and staff. One staff member described it as "much less punitive" than other residences they have worked in. The overall impact of this model, upon children and young people, is very good.

### **Young people experience positive transitions into the residence**

All young people who are placed at Te Poutama Ārahi Rangatahi must agree to the placement before they can go. Staff members from the residence meet with the young person and their

whānau prior to their admission to discuss what the residence is like and what the young person can expect during their time there. Whānau must also support their young person's admission to the residence as whānau therapy is a core part of the programme.

The residence has recently developed a magazine that contains youth-friendly explanations and pictures of the residence and staff. This helps explain what the residence is like. This is a very good initiative which should be normal practice across all residences.

### **Young people have good opportunities to have their ideas heard**

Weekly community meetings provide a regular time where young people can raise any concerns or suggestions about what they would like to be different at the residence. Young people told us they feel like staff listen to them and take them seriously, particularly when they want to talk about things that are bothering them. This might explain the low use of Whāia te Māramatanga at Te Poutama Ārahi Rangatahi.

### **Areas for development**

#### **Young people's plans are not youth-friendly**

As at our last visit, while planning for young people is comprehensive, there are no youth-friendly versions of young people's plans that they can use and understand. Several staff commented on the need for plans to be easier to understand for young people. Staff report that currently, young people 'skim and sign' their care plans without having a full understanding of what is in them. The residence's 2020 Action Plan outlines the intention to form a focus group to review and develop Individual Care Plans. Staff want to better represent the voice of young people and provide plans that are youth-friendly. At the time of our visit there was no progress on this aspect of the Action Plan, however we heard it is a priority for the residence leadership team moving forward. The practice in this area is currently poor.

#### **Young people are staying at the residence too long**

Transitions out of Te Poutama Ārahi Rangatahi are causing young people harm. Many staff we spoke to were worried about the length of time young people are staying at the residence after they have completed their therapeutic work. We understand there are issues with finding suitable community-based placements for young people. Staff told us when transitions out finally happen, they are often rushed and do not have robust planning around them. Some staff feel this is 'setting young people up to fail'. Another staff member questioned the ethics of working intensively with young people in a therapeutic way and then failing to support them to transition back to their community.

Many staff at the residence told us they are doing all they can to support transitions but Oranga Tamariki social workers are not as involved in planning as they would expect given the young people are in the custody of Oranga Tamariki. At the time of our visit, staff were following up on behalf of one young person who had not had an Oranga Tamariki social worker allocated since

their social worker had left several months previously. Clearer role definition and responsibility is required regarding transitions so young people can experience seamless transition out of the residence with the appropriate level of support from all agencies involved.

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## Domain 2: Protection system

*Our monitoring of the Protection System domain includes examination of the safety of children and young people, and how well their rights are upheld.*

### Findings from our last reports

In our last OPCAT report dated 6 December 2019 we said:

- Young people felt physically and emotionally safe at the residence
- Young people understood Whaia Te Māramatanga
- Grievance advocates were becoming more involved
- The group setting at the residence was not appropriate for all young people
- The Grievance Panel were finding it difficult to talk to young people one-on-one

In our COVID-19 report dated 18 June 2020 we said:

- VOYCE's Kaiwhakamana were in regular contact with young people at the residence.
- Young people knew about Whaia Te Māramatanga

### Findings from this visit

#### Strengths

##### **Young people feel safe at Te Poutama Ārahi Rangatahi**

All the young people we spoke to said they feel physically safe at the residence. They also told us they felt staff could keep them safe if there were escalated situations with other young people. Young people shared that in situations where they feel worried about something, they have at least one staff member they feel comfortable talking to. During our visit we observed staff quietly taking young people to one side, when they needed space away from the group, in order to calm down.

*"Sometimes the boys go off at each other, but the staff keep us safe."*

*"Um, I don't know actually, but it's just like safe in a way that you know not much bad shit's gonna happen."*

##### **VOYCE's Kaiwhakamana and the Grievance Panel visit the residence at least monthly**

Young people have access to two Kaiwhakamana who they feel able to speak to if they need advocacy or support. We heard that young people trust VOYCE staff and believe that if they need something VOYCE will support them. We understand there is a good relationship between residence staff and VOYCE, and that they work well together to ensure young people have access to advocacy when and how they need it.

The Grievance Panel visits four-weekly. At the time of our visit there were only two panellists as two had recently left. The panel is currently recruiting for additional members with the right combination of skills and attributes, who can relate to and support young people.

**Young people know how to use Whaia te Māramatanga**

Although there are generally low numbers of grievances, young people know how to use the grievance system. One young person told us they do not use the Whaia te Māramatanga because they do not believe anything would change if they did. Most young people said the community meeting was the place they felt most comfortable to raise any issues.

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## Domain 3: Material conditions

*Our monitoring of the Material Conditions domain includes looking at how the living conditions in secure residences contribute to children and young people's wellbeing, including accommodation, internal and external environments, hygiene facilities, bedding and food.*

### Findings from our last reports

In our last OPCAT report dated 6 December 2019 we said:

- The residence was clean, tidy and well looked after
- The young people were supported to have a say in the menu
- The common areas required some work to make them more therapeutic

### Findings from this visit

#### Strengths

##### **Young people like the food**

All young people at Te Poutama Ārahi Rangatahi told us they liked the food. This is uncommon in residences and not easy to achieve. We understand the cook works hard to make food that young people enjoy and uses dietician-approved recipes. We heard from one young person that they do not enjoy the food as much on the weekends, as the cook does not work during this time and care staff are responsible for cooking.

##### **The outside space at the residence is well utilised**

Young people have access to a large field area that contains a trampoline and vegetable garden that young people help staff tend. Young people can walk and ride bikes around the property including outside the fenced areas to the gate. Staff trust young people not to abscond from the residence and allow much freer movement around the campus than happens at other residences.

#### Areas for development

##### **There is no on-site gym**

Several young people told us they would like the residence to have its own gym. Young people thought this was important and something they had experienced in youth justice residences. We were told by staff that young people have access to community gyms and also have many other opportunities to be active. Staff said there were multiple risks involved in having gym equipment at the residence, such as young people hurting themselves or others. We believe the staff at Te Poutama Ārahi Rangatahi should have the skills required to mitigate any perceived or actual risk posed by having gym equipment available on-site.

**There has been no improvement in the physical environment of the residence**

We heard from most young people that they would like the inside of the residence redecorated. Young people told us they want to see the walls painted, and some suggested they could paint it themselves. It is unclear from staff how they will proceed with redecoration, however their aspirations for the environment appeared low. One staff member described the current physical environment as being "as good as the young people let it be".

During our time at the residence we observed run-down, institutional conditions in many areas. Such environments create barriers to therapeutic practice and are harmful to young people. We understand that Oranga Tamariki has given Barnardos a small property budget to repair and redecorate parts of the residence.

*"Get new carpet, get the walls painted properly, like do stuff like you know."*

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## Domain 4: Activities and contact with others

*Our monitoring of the Activities and Contact with Others domain assesses the opportunities available to children and young people to engage in quality, youth friendly activities inside and outside secure residences as well as contact with their whānau.*

### Findings from our last reports

In our last OPCAT report dated 6 December 2019 we said:

- Contact with whānau was well facilitated
- Activities were personalised for young people
- Young people's educational needs were being met

In our COVID-19 report dated 18 June 2020 we said:

- Young people were able to both phone and video call their whānau
- Young people were taken shopping before lockdown to ensure they had all they needed for the lockdown period.
- Young people missed being able to go off site, however had many activities to do on site.

### Findings from this visit

#### Strengths

##### **Young people can contact whānau in multiple ways**

Where possible, staff take young people back to their home areas to visit their whānau every month. This allows them to see more than just one or two whānau members. During these visits, young people can spend time in their own homes and have contact with wider whānau as well as pets. Both young people and staff spoke about the importance of these visits for healing, maintaining and at times, rebuilding relationships. This is a very good initiative which is a significant departure from usual practice. It should be normal practice across residences.

Every day, young people have opportunities to speak with their whānau on the phone. The residence has two cell phones exclusively for young people's use. Alternatively, young people can choose to connect with their whānau through video calls. Whānau are also supported to visit the residence.

##### **Young people enjoy education at the residence**

Most young people we spoke with said they enjoy school along with the other learning opportunities offered at the residence. Some talked about education at the residence as a 'second chance'. Each young person has a learning plan tailored to their goals and aspirations. We heard the high ratio of teaching staff to young people results in more one-to-one attention.

The residence has recently employed a new Lead Educator whose vision is to make residence education as similar to mainstream schooling as possible. It was clear that communication

between the education team and other residence staff was good and has improved since our last visit.

*"Oh, it was shit at first but now that I think about it, it's good to have that second chance, aye. Because if I was s 9(2)(a) OIA I wouldn't be at school."*

*"It's good, they got a school and that, can get credits and that, and work on your career and whatever."*

### **Young people participate in a good range of activities**

Community-based activities are fundamental to the success of young people's transitions and are prioritised as part of their therapeutic programming. Young people participate in many off-site activities tailored to their needs and interests. They have regular outings with their key worker where they participate in activities of their choice such as mountain biking and shopping. Additionally, young people participate in community sports competition and community-based support groups.

Young people also said they enjoy residence-based activities including trampolining, reading and watching Netflix. Group activities are facilitated by residential youth workers based on the interests of young people and the skills of staff.

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## Domain 5: Medical Services and care

*Our monitoring of the Medical Services and Care domain evaluates how well children and young people's health needs are assessed and met.*

### Findings from our last reports

In our last OPCAT report dated 6 December 2019 we said:

- Young people had regular access to primary health services
- Mental health services are managed on site
- The wait time for youth forensic services was long and inequitable among young people

In our COVID-19 report dated 18 June 2020 we said:

- The residence had a comprehensive pandemic plan
- Young people knew about COVID-19 and the importance of washing their hands.

### Findings from this visit

#### Strengths

##### **Young people have regular access to primary health services**

The same nurse visits the residence monthly to provide routine health care for young people as required. For more serious or urgent problems, young people are taken off-site to the doctor, nurse or dentist. Young people told us they did not experience any delays in seeing medical professionals.

##### **Young people have very good access to mental health support**

The therapeutic programme at Te Poutama Ārahi Rangatahi requires each young person to have a mental health clinician available on site. Young people said they have good relationships with these clinicians and value their support. They receive one-to-one therapy for three and a half hours each week. The primary focus is addressing s 9(2)(a) OIA. However over time, other issues such as trauma are also addressed. Additionally, group and family therapy are part of the programme. Many young people talked about the benefits of their time at the residence, saying they have learned a lot about themselves and how to deal s 9(2)(a) OIA

s 9(2)(a) OIA

## Domain 6: Personnel

*Our monitoring of the Personnel domain assesses the quality, suitability and capacity of Oranga Tamariki staff to provide safe, secure, respectful care for children and young people, including processes for staff recruitment, selection, training, supervision and ongoing professional development.*

### Findings from our last reports

In our last OPCAT report dated 6 December 2019 we said:

- Staff had regular training opportunities
- Staff received regular professional and cultural supervision
- The working relationships between teams were, at times, strained

In our COVID-19 report dated 18 June 2020 we said:

- There were a number of casual staff available if required
- The residence manager kept the number of staff on the floor to a minimum and promote social distancing

### Findings from this visit

#### Strengths

##### **Staff are good role models for young people**

During our time at the residence we observed staff role-modelling positive behaviours such as contributing in the mihi whakatau, doing the dishes with young people and showing interest in subjects and activities young people enjoy. Staff are supportive of what young people want to do and encourage them to engage in pro-social activities. Staff appeared to genuinely care for young people and want to have a positive influence on their lives.

##### **Staff have regular training opportunities**

There is a senior staff member who is responsible for ensuring staff receive regular training to ensure their skills are up to date. Most training is delivered in-house, by members of the clinical or leadership team. The residence has a comprehensive professional development plan for all staff and detailed records are kept of training undertaken by each staff member. Staff at Te Poutama Ārahi Rangatahi have varied experience and work well together to ensure young people receive consistent care.

##### **Staff receive regular group and cultural supervision**

The culture of the residence promotes reflective practice and prioritises staff supervision. Residential Youth Workers receive group supervision and cultural supervision once every three weeks. Staff told us supervision provides a 'safe space' to talk about different perspectives.

Another staff member said they feel supervision is crucial to staff wellbeing and care. The practice in this area is very good.

**The relationships between staff teams has significantly improved**

Since our last visit, there have been several changes to staff in management positions. Staff told us working relationships between the residential, clinical and education teams have improved as a result. We heard the various teams are working more cohesively than in the past and that this has increased the morale of the staff group and has impacted positively on young people.

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## Domain 7: Improving Outcomes for Mokopuna Māori

*Our monitoring of the Improving Outcomes for Mokopuna Māori domain assesses the residence's plans and progress for improving outcomes for mokopuna Māori, including the extent to which Māori values are embraced and upheld, and the relationships mokopuna are supported to have with their whānau, hapū and iwi.*

### Findings from our last reports

In our last OPCAT report dated 6 December 2019 we said:

- Kaimahi Māori were given strong leadership roles
- Staff upheld Māori practices regardless of the cohort of young people
- There were no clear goals for improving outcomes for mokopuna Māori
- Staff were concerned the residence did not always meet the needs of rangatahi Māori
- Young people had limited opportunities to learn about their own culture

In our COVID-19 report dated 18 June 2020 we said:

- The Kaihautū had been replaced
- Ministry of Health guidance was followed regarding mihi whakatau processes, including ceasing hongī for a period.

### Findings from this visit

#### Strengths

#### **The residence has an action plan that includes goals to improve outcomes for mokopuna Māori**

The 2020 Action Plan set goals and documented progress in relation to areas for development identified by the leadership team. Significant progress has been made in several areas including:

- ensuring that staff have completed 7AA and Te Rito training
- developing and trialling a process for reflecting on the appropriateness of the residence's admission process for rangatahi Māori
- recording the frequency of interactions between young people and their whānau so that regular contact is maintained
- providing staff with dedicated cultural support to enable them to increase young people's participation in cultural activities, for example learning about tikanga and kawa

#### **The Kaihautū works closely with staff to engage young people and their whānau**

Since taking on the cultural advisor role, the Kaihautū has made significant changes to practice in relation to whānau engagement. In this new approach, all young people and their whānau are

visited by the Kaihautū and another staff member who travel to the young person's home area prior to any decision being made about admission.

These visits are about whakawhānaungatanga - giving priority to the process of engaging kanohi ki te kanohi to develop relationships with whānau prior to the provision of any written information about the residence. This practice in this area is very good and could usefully be adopted by other residences.

### **Staff and young people are supported to develop their understanding of te ao Māori**

The Kaihautū describes his role as 'cultural advisor for anything kaupapa Māori.' Many of his activities are focussed on developing an understanding of te ao Māori across the residence. As part of this, the Kaihautū supports staff to learn about their whakapapa alongside young people. The goal was for each young person in the residence is to be supported to be able to perform their pepeha by the end of 2020. There are also plans for the re-establishment of Te Roopu Māori with 14 staff expressing interest in joining the group.

Further learning opportunities are provided through mihi whakatau which are held whenever people who have not previously visited the residence arrive for the first time. As part of this process, staff support young people to actively participate in the formalities through whaikōrero, leading waiata and playing the guitar.

The Kaihautū provides regular cultural supervision sessions for each team, supporting staff to understand their own culture so they can be culturally responsive to other staff, as well as to the young people in their care. There is good support for both young people and staff in relation to developing their understanding of te ao Māori.

### **Areas for development**

#### **Māori staff want greater involvement in the fostering and development of Māori expertise across the residence**

Despite the residence employing and promoting increasing numbers of kaimahi Māori, staff told us that there is room for improvement in the recruitment and retention of Māori staff. We heard about the importance of targeted advertising and the need for Māori representation throughout the whole recruitment process from shortlisting to interviewing.

Staff also told us it is important that management ensure the residence is a culturally safe place for kaimahi Māori. They talked about the need for salary levels that recognise Māori cultural skills for example, te reo Māori and knowledge of tikanga across the residence.

## Appendix One: Why we visit – legislative background

The Office of the Children’s Commissioner is designated as a National Preventive Mechanism (NPM) under the Crimes of Torture Act (1989). This Act contains New Zealand’s practical mechanisms for ensuring compliance with the United Nations Convention Against Torture and other Cruel, Inhuman, or Degrading Treatment or Punishment (OPCAT). The convention was ratified by New Zealand in 2007. Our role is to visit secure youth justice and care and protection residences to examine the conditions of the residences and treatment of children and young people, identify any improvements required or problems needing to be addressed and make recommendations aimed at improving treatment and conditions and preventing ill treatment.

In addition, the Children’s Commissioner has a statutory responsibility to monitor and assess the services provided under the Oranga Tamariki Act 1989. Specifically, section 13(1) (c) of the Children’s Commissioner Act 2003, states that the Commissioner must monitor and assess the policies and practices of Oranga Tamariki and encourage the development of policies and services that are designed to promote the welfare of children and young people.

Released under the Official Information Act 1982

## Appendix Two: Interviews and information gathering

Method	
Individual interviews	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Six children or young people</li> </ul>
Individual and group interviews	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Residence Manager</li> <li>• Operational Team Leaders (OTL)</li> <li>• Clinical Team Leader (CTL)</li> <li>• Audit and Compliance Advisor</li> <li>• Residential Youth Workers</li> <li>• Clinical team</li> <li>• Educational team</li> <li>• Kaihautū</li> <li>• Kitchen staff</li> <li>• Grievance Coordinator</li> </ul>
External stakeholder interviews	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• VOYCE Whakarongo Mai staff</li> <li>• Grievance Panel members</li> <li>• External health care provider</li> </ul>

Documentation	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• 2019 Oranga Tamariki audit report</li> <li>• Grievance quarterly reports</li> <li>• Grievance files</li> <li>• Young people's files – including Individual Care Plans and Operational Plans</li> <li>• Serious incidents and use of force register</li> <li>• Training register</li> <li>• Residence Action Plan 2020</li> </ul>
Observations	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Afternoon and evening observation of unit</li> <li>• Observation during meal time</li> <li>• Observation of shift handover</li> </ul>

## Appendix Three: Previous Recommendations

Previous recommendations from OPCAT report dated 06 December 2019:

<b>For Te Poutama Ārahi Rangatahi</b>	
Rec 1:	The leadership team takes an active role in improving communication and relationships between the residential, education, and clinical teams, so that young people receive consistent and seamless care. <b><i>There has been good progress against this recommendation (ref. page 17)</i></b>
Rec 2:	The leadership team ensures there is a time and place for young people to talk to Grievance Panel members that meets the needs of young people and allows for privacy and one-on-one conversations. <b><i>There has been good progress against this recommendation (ref. page 9)</i></b>
<b>For Barnardos National Office and the residence</b>	
Rec 3:	Create and implement a set of tangible, achievable and time framed goals for the residence that sit alongside Barnardos' Section 7AA Outcomes focused on meeting the clinical and cultural needs of rangatahi Māori. <b><i>There has been good progress against this recommendation (ref. page 18)</i></b>
Rec 4:	Barnardos works with Oranga Tamariki property services to enhance the indoor environment (dining and common area) of Te Poutama Ārahi Rangatahi to reduce the echo and paint the walls. These improvements will allow for a more therapeutic environment for young people. <b><i>There has been no progress against this recommendation (ref. page 11)</i></b>