



Whare Pūmau Mana – Community Remand Home

OPCAT Monitoring Report

Visit date: 8-10 October 2024

Report date: November 2024



Kia kuru pounamu te rongo

All mokopuna* live their best lives

- * Drawing from the wisdom of Te Ao Māori, we have adopted the term mokopuna to describe all children and young people we advocate for, aged under 18 years of age in Aotearoa New Zealand. This acknowledges the special status held by mokopuna in their families, whānau, hapū and iwi and reflects that in all we do. Referring to the people we advocate for as mokopuna draws them closer to us and reminds us that who they are, and where they come from matters for their identity, belonging and well-being, at every stage of their lives.



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Introduction

The role of Mana Mokopuna – Children and Young People's Commission

Mana Mokopuna - Children and Young People's Commission is an independent advocate for all children and young people (mokopuna) under the age of 18 and for those who are care-experienced, up to the age of 25. Mana Mokopuna advocates for children's rights to be recognised and upheld, provides advice and guidance to government and other agencies, advocates for system-level changes, and ensures children's voices are heard in decisions that affect them.

Our organisation is a designated National Preventive Mechanism (NPM) as per the Optional Protocol to the Convention Against Torture and Other Cruel, Inhuman, Degrading Treatment or Punishment (OPCAT).

The New Zealand legislation relating to OPCAT is contained in the Crimes of Torture Act (1989). The role of the NPM function at Mana Mokopuna is to visit places where mokopuna are detained:

- Examine the conditions and treatment of mokopuna.
- Identify any improvements required or problems needing to be addressed.
- Make recommendations aimed at strengthening protections, improving treatment and conditions, and preventing torture, cruel, inhuman, degrading treatment or punishment.

About this visit

Mana Mokopuna conducted a full unannounced visit to Whare Pūmau Mana Community Remand Home between 8-10 October 2024 as part of its NPM monitoring visit programme. The objective of our OPCAT Monitoring as a NPM is to prevent ill-treatment in all places where mokopuna are deprived of their liberty by regularly monitoring and assessing the standard of care experienced in these facilities.

About this report

This report shares the findings from the monitoring visit and recommends actions to address any issues identified. The report outlines the quality of mokopuna experience at the facility and provides evidence of the findings based on information gathered before, during, and after the visit.



About this facility

Facility Name:	Whare Pūmau Mana Community Remand Home. Oranga Tamariki contract Te Ikaroa Rangatahi Social Services to run operations and provide the care of mokopuna who are admitted into the whare.
Region:	Heretaunga (Hastings).
Operating capacity:	3 bed capacity and at the time of the visit there was one mokopuna in the whare. The whare comprises of three bedrooms to accommodate mokopuna tāne. There is a large kitchen, dining area and lounge with a kaimahi office near the bedrooms. There are bathrooms throughout the whare, including a laundry. There is a large outdoor area that includes a deck with a pool table, two garages, mara kai and a basketball hoop.
Status under which mokopuna are detained: s238(1)(d) of the Oranga Tamariki Act 1989.	

Key Findings

Mana Mokopuna found no evidence of cruel, inhumane, degrading treatment or punishment (ill-treatment) during the visit to Whare Pūmau Mana.

Areas of concern:

- Mokopuna are experiencing significant periods of time on remand (across the Oranga Tamariki System and including at this facility), with one mokopuna spending over 100 days (i.e. over three months) in the whare on remand.
- There has been an increase in mokopuna being placed from outside of their home region into the whare, presenting challenges that impact on the wellbeing of mokopuna – especially regarding their rights to family and whānau relationships, whakawhānaungatanga and identity.
- There is a lack of communication between mokopuna in the whare and their Oranga Tamariki social workers. Mokopuna are left waiting and wondering what the next steps are, with minimal response from their social workers.
- During the admission process, Whare Pūmau Mana kaimahi are receiving inadequate information about mokopuna needs, particularly in relation to mokopuna who are experiencing mental health challenges.
- The decision to cancel offsite activities after an incident in October 2023 has been challenging for mokopuna and kaimahi wellbeing, as activities now occur onsite at the whare with limited resources.
- There is a lack of consistent support and clear guidance from leadership.



- Kaimahi need regular, comprehensive training to support the changing needs of mokopuna, particularly those experiencing mental health challenges and neurodiversity.
- Mokopuna in the whare are not receiving timely medical care because they depend on their assigned Oranga Tamariki social workers to escort them to medical appointments. This is often delayed due to lack of availability of their social workers.
- Kaimahi are still not receiving regular, formal, professional and cultural supervision.
- Whare Pūmau Mana has a shortage of kaimahi and at times has had one kaimahi on shift with mokopuna. This is an unsafe approach, impacting on the quality of care, mokopuna and kaimahi safety.
- There is a need for thorough documentation processes and practices to be implemented to promote mokopuna and kaimahi safety and accountability within the whare. This is currently a risk area in the operation of the whare.

Areas of strength:

- Whānau access is prioritised to all mokopuna during their stay at Whare Pūmau Mana, including whānau who live outside the rōhe.
- Mokopuna and kaimahi build, strong positive relationships through whānaungatanga whilst they are in the whare.
- All kaimahi embody ngā uara (the values) emphasising whakapapa and whānau connections by applying a tuakana-teina approach with mokopuna.
- Kaimahi are consistent, innovative, skilled and have the best interests of mokopuna at heart. They are committed to providing high quality care and teaching mokopuna to be self-sufficient.
- Kaimahi do not use secure care at the whare, and physical intervention is used as a last resort, with emphasis on using de-escalation strategies that are supportive and safe for mokopuna.
- Mokopuna have opportunities to learn various life skills, such as cooking, during their time in the whare.
- Te Aho o Te Kura Pounamu promotes mokopuna-led education for mokopuna in the whare, with a practice-based approach catering to the individual needs of mokopuna.
- There are strong partnerships established with external stakeholders within the local community with a focus on enhancing care for mokopuna.



Recommendations

2024 Systemic and Oranga Tamariki National Office focused Recommendations

As a result of the findings of our OPCAT monitoring visit in October 2024, Mana Mokopuna makes the following recommendations:

	Recommendation
1	Oranga Tamariki social workers to regularly review s238(1)(d) custody statuses as per s242(1A) of the Oranga Tamariki Act 1989 and adhere to their responsibilities in a timely manner to prevent mokopuna spending long periods of time on remand ¹ .
2	Ensure timely and clear communication of care plans to mokopuna and Whare Pūmau Mana by assigned Oranga Tamariki Social Workers and ensuring these are accessible and can be understood by mokopuna ² .
3	Ensure social workers adhere to their practice responsibilities ³ for mokopuna and minimum contact visits as per Oranga Tamariki Policy ⁴ .
4	Ensure All About Me Plans are up to date as per the Oranga Tamariki policy ⁵ and provided to Whare Pūmau Mana prior to admission.
5	Oranga Tamariki and Whare Pūmau Mana to work together to reinstate offsite activities, such as fishing, eeling and swimming, to ensure mokopuna have access to cultural, recreational, and personal growth opportunities
6	Ensure mokopuna access to timely medical care that does not rely on their assigned Oranga Tamariki social workers being available to escort them to medical appointments.

¹ [14-day remand reviews of tamariki and rangatahi detained in a residence \(section 242\(1A\)\) or Corrections youth unit \(section 242\(2B\)\) | Practice Centre | Oranga Tamariki](#)

² [All About Me plan | Practice Centre | Oranga Tamariki](#)

³ [Allocating a key worker and co-worker | Practice Centre | Oranga Tamariki](#)

⁴ [Assessing the frequency of visits to tamariki in care | Practice Centre | Oranga Tamariki](#)

⁵ [All About Me plan | Practice Centre | Oranga Tamariki](#)



2024 Facility Recommendations for Te Ikaroa Rangatahi Social Services

	Recommendation
1	Continue enhancing whānau and iwi involvement in mokopuna care to strengthen whakapapa connections that support their holistic wellbeing.
2	Prioritise regular, ongoing comprehensive training for kaimahi, focusing on managing medical dispensation and complex needs such as mokopuna with neurodiversity and mental health challenges to better equip kaimahi to support mokopuna.
3	Implement documentation processes and practices that ensure all care plans, shift reports and notes are detailed, accurate and not pre-signed.
4	Leadership to prioritise and provide consistent support, guidance, and communication to ensure that kaimahi feel valued and equipped to meet the needs of mokopuna and contribute to the overall success of the whare in caring for mokopuna.
5	To ensure existing resources are maintained and provide additional resources to alleviate the pressures off kaimahi and to support mokopuna wellbeing and help to prevent mokopuna boredom.
6	Implement regular, formal professional and cultural supervision for kaimahi to promote professional growth, maintain and enhance practice, and improve both kaimahi and mokopuna wellbeing.
7	Prioritise recruitment of a casual pool of kaimahi for the whare to address the kaimahi levels, to ensure the safety and well-being of both mokopuna and kaimahi.



Concluding Observations from the United Nations

In February 2023, the United Nations Committee on the Rights of the Child ('the UN Committee') released its Concluding Observations⁶ for New Zealand's sixth periodic review on its implementation of the Children's Convention⁷ and how the Government is protecting and advancing the rights of mokopuna in Aotearoa New Zealand.

In August 2023, the United Nations Committee Against Torture also released Concluding Observations⁸ for New Zealand's seventh periodic review regarding the implementation of the Convention against Torture and Other Cruel, Inhuman or Degrading Treatment or Punishment⁹.

Both of these sets of concluding observations included recommendations to New Zealand relating to upholding the rights of mokopuna Māori.

Many of the recommendations from both sets of Concluding Observations are directly relevant to aspects of treatment experienced by mokopuna at Whare Pūmau Mana which Mana Mokopuna has found during this monitoring visit in October 2024. Where relevant, these are highlighted throughout the body of the report.

⁶ Refer CRC/C/NZL/CO/6 [G2302344 \(3\).pdf](#)

⁷ [Convention on the Rights of the Child | OHCHR](#)

⁸ Refer CAT/C/NZL/CO/7 [G2315464.pdf](#)

⁹ [Convention against Torture and Other Cruel, Inhuman or Degrading Treatment or Punishment | OHCHR](#)



Report findings by domain

Improving outcomes for mokopuna Māori

This domain focuses on identity and belonging, which are fundamental for all mokopuna to thrive. We note commitment to Mātauranga Māori and the extent to which Māori values are upheld, cultural capacity is expanded and mokopuna are supported to explore their whakapapa.

From Kahupō to Toiora: Empowering Mokopuna Through Whakapapa

"Not one more mokopuna!" is the guiding principle that grounds the kaupapa of Te Ikaroa Rangatahi Social Services¹⁰, as a result of an uplift of a mokopuna by Oranga Tamariki with involvement of New Zealand Police in the Hawkes Bay. This sparked a strong message from Ngahiwi Tomoana, the (at the time) Chairman of Ngāti Kahungunu, that "not one more child will be uplifted, and iwi will intervene at all costs."¹¹

Te Ikaroa Rangatahi Social Services is one of seven providers affiliated with Ngāti Kahungunu. In partnership with Oranga Tamariki, Ngāti Kahungunu Iwi Incorporated developed Te Ara Matua, a 'by Māori, for Māori'¹² solutions programme. This Ngāti Kahungunu-led initiative aims to provide integrated support through a collaborative approach, focusing on addressing the disproportionately high number of tamariki Māori in state care in Te Matau-a-Māui (Hawkes Bay). The services under this programme are commissioned by the iwi to providers such as Te Ikaroa Rangatahi Social Services.

One of the services run by Te Ikaroa Rangatahi Social Services is Whare Pūmau Mana community remand home. This is a whare within the Heretaunga (Hastings) community, grounded in kaupapa Māori that seeks to provide day-to-day care in a stable, safe and nurturing environment for mokopuna, who are remanded into the custody of Oranga Tamariki and Te Ikaroa Rangatahi Social Services in response to their offending behaviour. This includes delivering dedicated support for mokopuna as they journey from kahupō (darkness) to toiora (wellbeing).¹³

Kaimahi in the whare play a key role in fostering a strong sense of cultural identity and pride in mokopuna, supporting them to understand and connect with their ancestral heritage. During engagements with mokopuna as part of this OPCAT Monitoring visit, the monitoring

¹⁰ [Te Ikaroa Rangatahi Social Services • Healthpoint](#)

¹¹ [Iwi's message to Govt overtaken baby: 'Not one more child will be uplifted. We will intervene at all costs' - NZ Herald](#)

¹² [Te Ara Mātua | Kahungunu](#)

¹³ Documentation received from Whare Pūmau Mana.



team asked mokopuna about their whakapapa, and without hesitation, mokopuna knew immediately what we were asking, and confidently expressed their whakapapa back to Tūhoe and Tuwharetoa. This dedication of kaimahi in the whare to nurturing whakapapa and cultural pride ensures that mokopuna not only connect with their own heritage and whakapapa but can carry it forward with confidence into the future beyond their time in the whare, contributing to their overall toiora.

All kaimahi we met embodied ngā uara (the values) emphasising whakapapa¹⁴ and whānau connections by applying a tuakana-teina¹⁵ approach, to ensure that every mokopuna leaves the whare with a deeper understanding of their whakapapa, regardless of whether mokopuna whakapapa Ngāti Kahungunu or not. For example, kaimahi and mokopuna would learn their pepeha together, with kaimahi simultaneously learning about mokopuna whakapapa, while the mokopuna shared their knowledge, creating a mutual learning experience.

As one kaimahi shared:

"We support them to know their whakapapa; we try to contact whānau as a starting point and do research alongside them."

The kaupapa Māori approach to practice at Whare Pūmau Mana upholds Articles 2 and Article 3 of Te Tiriti o Waitangi¹⁶, as it aims to empower hāpori Māori to shape the care of mokopuna and ensures that mokopuna can confidently connect with their whakapapa, fostering a strong foundation for their future.

Embracing whakapapa and the role of Whānaungatanga

Kaimahi embody the principle of whānaungatanga through their relational practice, emphasising connection and support. The monitoring team observed kaimahi engaging with mokopuna through active listening, collaboration, and respect for rangatiratanga¹⁷. Kaimahi always asked mokopuna to participate in a range of activities throughout the visit if they wanted to, while fostering trust, reliability, and consistency to build a meaningful and supportive relationship that prioritised the mana of mokopuna. An example of this is that mokopuna in the whare during the visit had suggested playing games of pool or bus stop, and taught kaimahi, including Mana Mokopuna kaimahi undertaking monitoring, how to play this.

¹⁴ Whakapapa [Microsoft Word - MS072_0x_A2_Te Rito_FINAL.doc](#)

¹⁵ [The concept of a tuakana-teina relationship / Aspects of planning / Teaching and learning te reo Māori / Curriculum guidelines / Home - Te reo Māori](#)

¹⁶ [Te Tiriti o Waitangi – the Treaty of Waitangi](#)

¹⁷ [rangatiratanga - Te Aka Māori Dictionary](#)



Mokopuna who spoke with us valued this approach, as they highlighted how well they were treated by kaimahi and appreciated the intentional time that kaimahi spent with mokopuna to kōrero about what mattered most to them. This was valued by mokopuna whether it was accessing information about a visit from their social worker, or learning about their interests such as cooking, to help with the mokopuna experience in the whare. This demonstrated that kaimahi took the time to understand the worlds of mokopuna in their care and were concerned to make their time in the whare more pleasant.

The practical skills offered to mokopuna through creating meaningful opportunities for kaimahi to share mātauranga (knowledge), worldviews and pukenga (skills), creates opportunity to connect mokopuna to their whakapapa. For example, during the visit, kaimahi were observed utilising their hunting skills by bringing in a deer to teach mokopuna how to skin, carve and prepare it for kai. This hands-on experience allowed mokopuna to actively participate, learn, and engage in an environment that was safe, but engage at their own pace and when they wanted. This occurred through the kaimahi setting up a station outside near the pool table, where the mokopuna could engage in it when they wanted to but have the freedom to do something else like play pool whilst continuing to observe the deer processing, making the relationship and exchange of knowledge process authentic.

This approach was constant throughout the visit, and not only did we see how kaimahi brought their authentic selves to their mahi, but we also noticed mokopuna developing in their own identity and sense of belonging as Māori. Through such experiences, mokopuna were empowered with the tools and knowledge necessary to thrive. The commitment kaimahi show to toiora, ensuring mokopuna are supported as whānau, reinforces their ability to grow, learn, and succeed in a holistic, culturally grounded way. This is a real strength of Whare Pūmau Mana.



Treatment

This domain focuses on any allegations of torture or ill-treatment, use of seclusion, use of restraint and use of force. We also examine models of therapeutic care provided to mokopuna to understand their experience.

Kaimahi enhancing mokopuna wellbeing

Strong, trusting relationships between kaimahi and mokopuna are crucial to creating a safe and supportive environment. These relationships provide the foundation for meaningful engagement, enabling mokopuna to feel secure, respected, connected, and promotes engagement while they are staying in the whare.

The monitoring team observed kaimahi embodying genuine care and respect in their interactions with mokopuna. They took on key roles, such as Whaea, who provided a nurturing māmā figure, or kaimahi who served as a tuakana, offering guidance and leadership. By balancing firmness with approachability, kaimahi fostered an environment where mokopuna felt comfortable and supported, allowing them to engage with confidence and belonging.

A clear example of this was seeing mokopuna participate without prompting or hesitation, showing initiative and a sense of belonging as they interacted with kaimahi, helping with tasks like cooking and cleaning. This spontaneous involvement demonstrates the strong rapport and trust that had been established with mokopuna, where mokopuna felt valued and part of the whānau. One mokopuna shared with the OPCAT Monitoring team that "*they treat me with manners and check in on me,*" ensuring their well-being was consistently monitored. Positive interactions were frequent, reinforcing their sense of belonging within the whare.

This highlighted that it is not about the activity itself, but about intentionally building relationships. It's about mokopuna having voice, taking ownership, and showing they are invested in the well-being of everyone in the whare. Ultimately, these interactions serve as the foundation for a thriving, connected community where mokopuna are empowered, cared for, and capable of contributing meaningfully.

Whare Pūmau Mana ensures support and care, not Secure Care

There is no use of Secure Care within the whare, and physical intervention is considered as a last resort only when mokopuna are self-harming or at risk of seriously harming others. Kaimahi are trained in Crisis Prevention Institute Safety Intervention (CPI) (formerly known as MAPA)¹⁸ to ensure they are equipped to handle such situations, if necessary, but the priority

¹⁸ [Safety Intervention Foundation Training | Crisis Prevention Institute \(CPI\)](#)



is always to de-escalate and support mokopuna in ways that avoid the use of physical intervention.

Kaimahi emphasise whānaungatanga by not only supporting mokopuna with care, but also providing them with the tools to thrive. Kaimahi create an environment where mokopuna feel safe, respected, and empowered, reinforcing positive relationships over punitive measures, through meaningful engagements to establish a strong and respectful relationship with mokopuna. This approach is reflected in the meaningful, one-on-one engagement seen during our monitoring visit, where kaimahi spent their shifts checking in with mokopuna, participating in their chosen activities such as shooting hoops, playing Monopoly Deal, or offering space for mokopuna to be independent when needed, while maintaining line of sight to mokopuna to ensure safety within the whare.

When challenges arise, kaimahi use a range of de-escalation strategies to maintain a safe and supportive environment. These strategies include:

- Rotating kaimahi to bring in a different perspective and approach in de-escalating mokopuna if necessary.
- Engaging mokopuna in one-on-one conversations to address concerns.
- Making phone calls to whānau or reaching out to kaimahi with whom mokopuna have developed strong, trusting connections with. Sometimes, hearing a familiar voice or simply having space to cool down can help mokopuna regain their sense of security and balance when they are heightened.
- Engaging mokopuna in activities they enjoy, such as cooking their favourite kai, to help support mokopuna to de-escalate.

Kaimahi shared with us that one mokopuna loved mince, and when the mokopuna was experiencing escalated behaviour, a strategy that kaimahi would use was cooking something with mince. This provided an opportunity for kaimahi and mokopuna to unpack what was occurring for the mokopuna and de-escalate over a kai that they loved. This approach emphasises that relationships, not the use of force or restraint, are central to fostering mokopuna well-being, and are possible and achievable in practice through the combination of effective professional training and skill, and the commitment to building genuine relationships with mokopuna grounded in confidence, trust and respect. This relationship-driven approach ensures that mokopuna are supported to thrive in the whare, even in the most challenging moments.



Kaimahi value relational practice and mokopuna active participation as an approach, where mokopuna are treated as taonga and offered special protection, rather than resorting to secure care. This aligns with Article 2 of Te Tiriti o Waitangi¹⁹ and Article 37(a) of the Children's Convention.²⁰

Lack of care plans from Oranga Tamariki social workers are affecting mokopuna wellbeing.

A key responsibility for Oranga Tamariki social workers is ensuring that mokopuna have access to clear and understandable information about their care plans²¹. However, feedback from mokopuna in Whare Pūmau Mana continues to reveal significant gaps in this area. One mokopuna described their experience with their social worker as: *"not good. The social worker is meant to try and get me out, but they're not really doing that!"* This highlights a critical issue relating to mokopuna experience and care at Whare Pūmau Mana that many mokopuna feel unsupported by their Oranga Tamariki social workers and lack the clarity they need about their care plans, particularly when mokopuna are on remand and therefore facing significant uncertainty regarding their future and care.

VOYCE Whakarongomai²² continues to hear from mokopuna in Whare Pūmau Mana and advocates for the urgent need for accessible and timely information regarding mokopuna care. Regardless of their backgrounds, charges, or circumstances, mokopuna continue to voice the ongoing challenges to understand about the decisions being made relating to them and that impact them directly. Mokopuna shared with us the lack of communication from social workers around updates relating to their care and remand situation, particularly about their transition plans back into their community.

The lack of communication from Oranga Tamariki social workers with mokopuna in Whare Pūmau Mana continues to leave uncertainty for mokopuna and kaimahi. This also has practical impacts given that kaimahi are then unable to implement frameworks like *PARTH*²³ effectively, as they are unable to set goals to support mokopuna care plans, due to the lack of information received from social workers. When information is not communicated or shared, additional pressure is put on Whare Pūmau Mana kaimahi, leading to missed opportunities for better mokopuna care and engagement and increased risk around safety of kaimahi and mokopuna. This is because if kaimahi are not being properly informed of potential triggers and safety plans, the whānau history of mokopuna or presenting behavioural concerns and needs for

¹⁹ [Te Tiriti o Waitangi – the Treaty of Waitangi](#)

²⁰ [Convention on the Rights of the Child | OHCHR](#)

²¹ [Working with tamariki and rangatahi in remand homes | Practice Centre | Oranga Tamariki](#)

²² [Home - VOYCE - WHAKARONGO MAI](#)

²³ [World first tool getting youth on the right PARTH - Massey University](#)



mokopuna could result in thorough individualised plans not being able to be developed to support mokopuna and meet their needs whilst in the whare.

To align with UNCRC Article 12²⁴ and Te Tiriti o Waitangi²⁵ (particularly Article 2), improved engagement with and advocacy for mokopuna at Whare Pūmau is required from Oranga Tamariki social workers. Social workers must actively involve mokopuna in decision-making to ensure their rights and cultural needs are fully met.

Mokopuna are spending significant periods of time on remand waiting for plans to be developed.

During the last OPCAT monitoring visit in 2022 Whare Pūmau Mana were only accepting admissions for mokopuna that were from the region. However, due to the increasing demand and need for remand beds for mokopuna, Whare Pūmau Mana now accepts admissions for mokopuna from out of region. This has created various challenges that impact on mokopuna, which are further compounded by inadequate support, insufficient information, and a lack of follow-through from out of region Oranga Tamariki social workers. Mokopuna and kaimahi at Whare Pūmau Mana face significant impacts both on their wellbeing and the care process when mokopuna are placed out of region and plans are not put in place to provide adequate and appropriate support to meet specific mokopuna needs – including to uphold their rights to whānau and identity.

Some of the challenges include:

- **Escort and transport:** The pressure on local Oranga Tamariki social workers to manage transport and coordination for appointments or court appearances for mokopuna is significant particularly because resources are stretched thin and there is insufficient planning being completed by allocated social workers from other regions.
- **Lack of whānau visits:** Many mokopuna are not receiving regular visits from their whānau due to distance between the whare and where their whānau live, often out of the rōhe. This negatively impacts on mokopuna and whānau emotional and psychological wellbeing. Kaimahi shared that one mokopuna had been placed in the whare who was from Ōtautahi (Christchurch) and shared the struggles that this mokopuna had while in the whare, due to being so far away from their whānau and their hometown.
- **Lack of contact and communication with Oranga Tamariki social workers:** The local Oranga Tamariki Youth Justice team completes frequent audits in line with 14-day

²⁴ Article 12 and 2 [Convention on the Rights of the Child | OHCHR](#)

²⁵ [The three articles of the Treaty of Waitangi – Nation and government – Te Ara Encyclopedia of New Zealand](#)



remand reviews²⁶. This has highlighted concerns around a lack of contact from Oranga Tamariki social workers with mokopuna, including a lack of and infrequency of visits, leaving mokopuna uncertain about the next steps in their care journey. Mokopuna and their whānau are left wondering when their social worker will follow up or make contact.

Oranga Tamariki must ensure support is provided for mokopuna to maintain contact and connection with their whānau, and their whānau must be kept informed and have opportunities to participate in decision-making relating to their mokopuna whilst mokopuna are placed in the care or custody of the Chief Executive.²⁷ The lack of communication and contact from social workers with mokopuna in Whare Pūmau Mana goes against Oranga Tamariki policy around supporting mokopuna whilst they are in care.

This has resulted in the local Oranga Tamariki site dedicating a social worker to complete visits, provide support and liaise with out of region Oranga Tamariki site social workers allocated to mokopuna, to ensure mokopuna needs are met. However, this puts extra pressure on local social workers who are already managing a caseload, and the impact for mokopuna is they have to build a relationship with another professional who they do not know.

Mana Mokopuna recommends that each mokopuna admitted into the whare has a key allocated Oranga Tamariki social worker and that they fulfil their practice responsibilities of visiting and communicating with mokopuna as per the Oranga Tamariki policy, to ensure mokopuna and their whānau are informed and included in decision making about their care plans.

Social workers have key practice responsibilities for mokopuna including maintaining regular contact with other professionals involved in their care, ensuring communication with agency kaimahi is open, transparent, and regular to ensure the All About Me plan is followed²⁸. Inconsistencies of social workers fulfilling their primary responsibilities for mokopuna can negatively impact on their care.

²⁶ [14-day remand reviews of tamariki and rangatahi detained in a residence \(section 242\(1A\)\) or Corrections youth unit \(section 242\(2B\)\) | Practice Centre | Oranga Tamariki](#)

²⁷ [Support for tamariki and rangatahi in care or custody | Practice Centre | Oranga Tamariki](#)

²⁸ [Allocating a key worker and co-worker | Practice Centre | Oranga Tamariki](#)



The lack of planning and communication with mokopuna on remand in Whare Pūmau Mana is resulting in mokopuna spending significant periods of time on remand, waiting for a plan to be developed regarding their on-going care, where they will live and interventions that will be implemented to support mokopuna and address their offending behaviour. Kaimahi told us that the longest stay for mokopuna placed in Whare Pūmau Mana had been 104 days during 2024²⁹. Kaimahi shared with us that the reason for this was delays in Oranga Tamariki social work reports and plans being developed and implemented. Whare Pūmau Mana kaimahi said they are frequently having to advocate and follow up with Oranga Tamariki to get updates for mokopuna, even days before Family Group Conferences (FGC's) are convened.

This reflects systemic issues within Oranga Tamariki practice and processes, which need to be addressed to prevent further negative impacts for mokopuna on remand in Whare Pūmau Mana. These systemic issues Mana Mokopuna have observed in OPCAT monitoring throughout the Oranga Tamariki youth justice residence and community-run remand home ecosystem and we note that this is a wider systemic issue beyond Whare Pūmau Mana.

Kaimahi and stakeholders who spoke with us shared that some of the barriers that lead to mokopuna spending long periods of time on remand are:

- Mokopuna not having an appropriate bail address.
- Oranga Tamariki social workers and other professionals not completing tasks that they are supposed to for mokopuna in a timely manner, such as writing reports on time.
- Section 333 reports³⁰ can take up to 10-12 weeks to be prepared, depending on the capacity and availability of writers for the reports. This impacts on social work reports and plans being developed in a timely manner, as these assessments play an integral role in determining the most appropriate interventions and supports required to be implemented and encompassed, within plans to meet the needs of mokopuna.

Delays such as those mentioned above result in mokopuna being on remand for extended periods of time without clarity and certainty about their next steps. This creates emotional and physical distress for mokopuna and their whānau, and at times can result in mokopuna absconding from Whare Pūmau Mana, as there is no clear goal in sight for them. This is also challenging for kaimahi at Whare Pūmau Mana, as the lack of timeframes and plans for mokopuna impacts on the level of support and intervention that kaimahi can implement, particularly for mokopuna who are placed out of their home region. Addressing these systemic challenges should help to better support mokopuna and their whānau, providing mokopuna with the clarity, certainty of next steps, care and emotional stability they need during a difficult and uncertain time in their lives as mokopuna.

²⁹ Data supplied from Oranga Tamariki monthly reports, is sourced from operational data and subject to change/correction.

³⁰ [Oranga Tamariki Act 1989 No 24 \(as at 30 June 2024\), Public Act 333 Medical, psychiatric, and psychological reports – New Zealand Legislation](#)



Delays in Oranga Tamariki decision-making and a lack of adequate support from Oranga Tamariki for mokopuna placed in Whare Pūmau Mana is impacting negatively on mokopuna rights under Article 2 and 3 of Te Tiriti o Waitangi, as well as Articles 12³¹ and 20 of the UNCRC. This is meaning that mokopuna are not always having timely care plans, insufficient follow-up with mokopuna is occurring, and mokopuna are unable to exercise tino rangatiratanga in decisions that affect them. Failure to address these issues risks institutionalization of mokopuna.

³¹ Article 12 and 20 UNCRC [Convention on the Rights of the Child | OHCHR](#)



Protection Systems

This domain examines how well-informed mokopuna are upon entering a facility. We also assess measures that protect and uphold the rights and dignity of mokopuna, including complaints procedures and recording systems.

Lack of essential information about mokopuna from Oranga Tamariki impacts on the admission process at Whare Pūmau Mana

The admissions process at Whare Pūmau Mana begins when the Oranga Tamariki social worker contacts the supervisor at Whare Pūmau Mana, who then consults with the manager to assess whether mokopuna are a suitable fit for the whare. Once approved, whare kaimahi are notified to prepare the whare for mokopuna admissions. However, the identified gap within this process is the quality and the lack of information provided by Oranga Tamariki social workers, particularly within the All About Me plans relating to individual mokopuna. These plans lack details about mokopuna individualised needs, including those who experience mental health challenges and require safety plans. These All About Me plans do not sufficiently capture the voices of mokopuna and their whānau.

Due to the above, All About Me Plans are often lacking important information that kaimahi at Whare Pūmau Mana need to prepare for the mokopuna's arrival into the whare, so that this can support their needs and rights. Kaimahi need this essential information because it helps them ensure a smooth transition by outlining the mokopuna's needs, cultural background, and potential challenges. Without this information, kaimahi are unable to fully address individual mokopuna needs, which can lead to confusion, stress, or discomfort during the transition, which impacts their overall well-being. This was evident during the monitoring visit, as mokopuna in the whare had an upcoming court appearance and was still waiting for their FGC to occur. Mokopuna told the OPCAT Monitoring team that they were hōha, due to the uncertainty around whether bail was an option and where they would be going, especially as they had been in the whare for a month and had been trying their best to adhere to their bail conditions as they wanted to go home to their whānau.

"Whānau live down the road, but I don't want to leave because I don't want to get anymore charges, I want to go home to my whānau".

(Mokopuna)

It also places additional pressure on kaimahi to fill in the gaps, affecting their ability to engage effectively and provide appropriate support. Kaimahi told us that the absence of clear, comprehensive care plans undermines kaimahi ability to effectively support mokopuna. Lack of information regarding mokopuna emotional and behavioural needs puts both the



mokopuna and the whare environment at risk. Mana Mokopuna recommends that All About Me Plans are up-to-date, comprehensive, include mokopuna actively being involved in developing the plan that directly relates to them, and that these plans are provided to Whare Pūmau Mana for every mokopuna prior to their admission to the whare. Without clear, detailed care plans and effective communication around these plans and mokopuna individual needs and situations, Whare Pūmau Mana faces ongoing challenges in providing the necessary support for mokopuna, delaying their rehabilitation and long-term wellbeing.

There are significant gaps in recording and documentation at Whare Pūmau Mana

Documentation and recording at Whare Pūmau Mana has significant gaps that are impacting on the quality of care provided to mokopuna. For example, shift plans were found to be pre-signed by a supervisor from Whare Pūmau Mana who is no longer employed, raising concerns about their validity and whether proper oversight is being maintained. Additionally, there is a lack of detailed notes and care plans for mokopuna, hindering effective planning and support. This lack of documentation undermines accountability and contributes to inconsistent quality care.

Upon review of Whare Pūmau Mana documentation, we observed several issues with the quality of documentation, including incomplete shift plans and missing care notes. This inconsistency in recording practices makes it difficult for kaimahi to stay informed about mokopuna specific needs, and results in missed opportunities for coordinated care. The absence of complete and accurate records impedes the ability of kaimahi to support mokopuna effectively and safely, while also affecting the continuity of care across shifts in the whare.

Effective documentation and accurate recording are critical in ensuring that mokopuna individual needs are met, that kaimahi are able to communicate clearly with one another, and that the rights and well-being of mokopuna are consistently prioritised. Lack of standardised documentation practices reflects poor internal oversight and places both mokopuna and kaimahi at risk. Without clear, complete, and up-to-date records, kaimahi cannot develop and implement appropriate care plans, which compromises the quality of care and impacts the safety and well-being of mokopuna in the whare.

Ensuring robust and thorough documentation is a necessary and crucial step in building a system that consistently prioritises mokopuna and strengthens the foundations of care. Whare Pūmau Mana must prioritise addressing the immediate improvement of inconsistent and/or incomplete records by kaimahi, to better equip and meet the evolving needs of mokopuna and to ensure the safety of both mokopuna and kaimahi.



Strong partnerships with external stakeholders enhance the care for mokopuna

Whare Pūmau Mana has built strong communication and partnerships with local external stakeholders in Heretaunga, including VOYCE Whakarongomai, Police Youth Aid, and local Oranga Tamariki site social workers and supervisors. These strong collaborative relationships were established with the intention of working with mokopuna locally to provide a local response that supports reintegration back into the community. Even though Whare Pūmau Mana now receives admissions for mokopuna from out of the region, the strong collaborative approach remains locally. However, kaimahi at Whare Pūmau Mana hope that the relationships with Oranga Tamariki sites out of region can be further strengthened to ensure there is a better response to meeting mokopuna needs when they are placed from out of their home regions given the increase in these admissions into the whare.

The local Oranga Tamariki site social workers, supervisors and external partners not only visit the whare but provide support and assistance where required. For example, Police Youth Aid and kaimahi at Whare Pūmau Mana have established a relationship where kaimahi can phone Police Youth Aid in times of need when mokopuna are escalating or may need reminding around their bail conditions. Police Youth Aid shared with Mana Mokopuna that they also make time to go around to the whare and get to know the mokopuna through engaging in activities like basketball, so mokopuna know that there is a wider network of professionals who are focused on supporting them whilst in the whare. Oranga Tamariki social workers have delivered trainings to kaimahi to support them caring for mokopuna.

Kaimahi at Whare Pūmau Mana mentioned that regular engagement with external agencies has benefited them and mokopuna, as it provides a holistic, wraparound network of support for mokopuna. The involvement of VOYCE Whakarongomai has been instrumental in ensuring mokopuna feel heard and supported, as it provides individualised opportunities for advocacy and support for mokopuna. In addition, leadership at Whare Pūmau Mana, including visits from community leaders and kaumātua, contributes to fostering an environment of care and oversight for the well-being of mokopuna.

The collaboration between Whare Pūmau Mana and external stakeholders helps to bridge significant gaps in communication. While these relationships have fostered a positive environment and increased confidence among kaimahi, the need for clearer communication with mokopuna about their future remains a key area of focus. Without consistent and timely updates from Oranga Tamariki, mokopuna may continue to feel uncertain and disconnected from their care process.



Personnel

This domain focuses on the relationships between staff and mokopuna, and the recruitment, training, support and supervision offered to the staff team. In order for facilities to provide therapeutic care and a safe environment for mokopuna, staff must be highly skilled, trained and supported.

Leadership to strengthen collaborative communication with kaimahi

There is a need for improved communication and transparency between kaimahi and leadership within Whare Pūmau Mana. Despite kaimahi commitment and passion to the mahi, their concerns and requests for support had not been adequately heard and responded to. Kaimahi said there was a period this year where there had been mokopuna in the whare with mental health challenges and challenging behaviour, that they were not prepared for. Kaimahi had asked leadership on numerous occasions for support and training. However, these requests were not responded to and resulted in kaimahi completing several incident reports to escalate their concerns in order for leadership to listen. By the time training was provided, kaimahi said *"it was too late"*, as mokopuna behaviours had escalated that could have been prevented if training had been put in place when they had initially begun asking.

This highlights the need for better connection between the kaimahi team's day-to-day needs and the ability of leadership of the whare to respond effectively. Kaimahi shared that although the whare leadership has begun addressing communication, through facilitating debriefs after incidents occur kaimahi still require clearer guidance and more consistent support, such as regular check-ins with leadership that can help strengthen kaimahi capability and confidence to navigate the challenges that kaimahi face when working with mokopuna who are on remand in Whare Pūmau Mana. Leadership must support regular, open communication with kaimahi to actively provide consistent and accessible guidance to manage challenges effectively and provide better support for kaimahi and mokopuna. Kaimahi expressed if supported and heard, they will be better equipped to care for mokopuna, and to contribute to quality care for mokopuna and the success of the whare.

Kaimahi require regular training to improve practice to meet the needs of mokopuna

Kaimahi highlighted the need for quality professional development and training, given the significant challenges faced in responding to the complex needs of mokopuna. Kaimahi shared within the last six months there has been several mokopuna admitted who were presenting with self-harm, suicidal ideation, and mental distress. Kaimahi shared their experiences about several incidents that occurred, where the team were unprepared and overwhelmed, as they have not had mokopuna in the whare experiencing these challenges before. These incidents



with mokopuna escalated to physical confrontations, mokopuna not listening, property damage and conflict among kaimahi during shift changes, as kaimahi began placing blame on each other for not handling the situation better.

After the incident, kaimahi participated in a training session provided by Oranga Tamariki and the local Child, Adolescent Family Service (CAFS)³² resulting in the whare having to be shut down for a week for debriefs to occur and kaimahi to undergo a training programme. While kaimahi found the training was good, they expressed the need for more frequent and regular training opportunities, through raising these needs in the shift handover notes. Kaimahi have raised concerns about the lack of on-going training in handling self-harm and mental health issues. One kaimahi shared the following, talking about the kinds of care that is required to meet mokopuna needs in the whare, saying *"This is way out of my league. I have to google the medications mokopuna are on just to know how to pronounce them."*

With the lack of adequate and ongoing training to support kaimahi to meet mokopuna needs and provide effective care, kaimahi are proactively seeking ways to upskill themselves. This is not an acceptable or sustainable situation, however, the commitment of kaimahi to professional upskilling is positive and indicates a strong desire for professional development and better tools to support mokopuna with complex needs. Mana Mokopuna recommends Whare Pūmau Mana prioritises and establishes a consistent, ongoing training schedule to meet kaimahi needs so they are equipped to support mokopuna holistic needs. All kaimahi should be supported to engage in comprehensive training at the outset of their roles at the whare and on an ongoing basis, equipping them with the tools and knowledge to support mokopuna.

Improvement needed in kaimahi supervision

Supervision for kaimahi at Whare Pūmau Mana is currently provided on an internal, monthly basis, ensuring that kaimahi working alongside mokopuna have some level of support. However, kaimahi are not receiving regular formal, professional, or cultural supervision. The lack of consistent supervision limits the ability to maintain mokopuna-centred practices and impacts the overall wellbeing of kaimahi. Kaimahi have expressed the need for more frequent and structured supervision, which includes both professional and cultural support. This would help to ensure their practice remains aligned with tikanga of Whare Pūmau Mana and supports their own development. Without regular supervision, kaimahi can struggle to consistently deliver high-quality care. Their professional growth and ability to manage the complex needs of mokopuna are also hindered, affecting both morale and care quality.

For example, kaimahi shared feeling unsupported when they had been dealing with the several incidents occurring during the time when mokopuna were in the whare experiencing mental

³² [Child, Adolescent and Family Service / Ngā Harakeke mai Rongokako, \(CAFS\) - Hawkes Bay District Health Board – Our Health](#)



health challenges. Kaimahi told the OPCAT Monitoring team that it had been a challenging time making critical decisions about the care of the mokopuna due to them feeling unsupported and that it was out of their depth to deal with. Without ongoing supervision, this can affect kaimahi confidence and ability to provide the quality care. This gap in supervision also makes it harder to reflect on and improve their practices in a structured way.

Regular, ongoing professional and cultural supervision for kaimahi should be made a requirement at Whare Pūmau Mana, so that kaimahi receive consistent guidance to improve their skills and practice. It will also support kaimahi overall wellbeing, offering a space for reflection, debriefing, and emotional support, helping manage stress and demands of their roles more effectively. Mana Mokopuna recommends that Whare Pūmau Mana strengthen supervision for kaimahi by ensuring it is frequent and structured to better equip kaimahi to meet the needs of mokopuna, ensure the delivery of quality care, and support kaimahi professional growth and overall wellbeing.

A shortage of kaimahi in the whare places pressure on mokopuna care

Leadership acknowledged there is a shortage of kaimahi working in the whare and that they are experiencing challenges around kaimahi being on leave, including ACC leave or phoning in sick five minutes prior to their shift starting. There is a rule in place that two kaimahi from the same shift cannot be on leave at the same time, as a way of mitigating shortages. There is no casual kaimahi pool to draw from, which also leads to challenges in maintaining a full and consistent kaimahi roster. The shortage of kaimahi was evident during the OPCAT Monitoring visit, as on some of the shifts there was only one kaimahi on shift with mokopuna.

At the time of the visit there was only one mokopuna in the whare, however with only one kaimahi on shift, coupled with the absence of an allocated supervisor on leave, this raised concerns for Mana Mokopuna regarding the safety and supervision of mokopuna, particularly in the event of an incident. This highlighted the risks to both mokopuna and kaimahi, as such situations increase the risk of allegations being made against kaimahi or mishandling of incidents and kaimahi expressed the pressure they felt in maintaining a safe and supportive environment under these conditions.

When there is insufficient kaimahi, support for mokopuna is compromised and the ability of kaimahi to respond to risks is affected. Mana Mokopuna recommends that priority is given to recruiting a casual pool of kaimahi to utilise to work at the whare, to ensure the safety and well-being of both mokopuna and kaimahi through appropriate staffing levels. This will also assist to mitigate the risk of allegations being made against kaimahi and foster a stable, well-supported work environment. Furthermore, we are of the view that this will allow kaimahi to provide the care and attention mokopuna need without the added pressure of understaffing, and therefore strengthen the quality of care overall.



Material Conditions

This domain assesses the quality and quantity of food, access to outside spaces, hygiene facilities, clothing, bedding, lighting and ventilation available to mokopuna. It focuses on understanding how the living conditions in secure facilities contribute to the well-being and dignity of mokopuna.

A Homely space for Mokopuna

Whare Pūmau Mana had recently undergone a refurbishment to address property damage which had occurred as a result of several incidents involving mokopuna who were previously admitted into the whare. The whare is now in good condition, with a welcoming and homely atmosphere. Bedrooms are personalised with duvets, and for those not in use, preparations are made for new arrivals, ensuring items such as towels, toothpaste, and deodorant are readily available. The whare is designed with a focus on safety and visibility, with three bedrooms located near the office to maintain line of sight. The whare includes three bathrooms, a fully stocked kitchen, and areas for recreation, including a pool table, boxing bag and a shed where activities like fixing motorbikes can happen.

The Whare is whaikaha-friendly, with wheelchair accessibility into the whare and is well-maintained, providing a safe environment for mokopuna. The outside area features a large mārakai where kaimahi teach mokopuna to grow their own vegetables to use in preparing meals. There is a basketball hoop and two garages, one dedicated for mokopuna and kaimahi to work together on a motorbike at the time of our visit, while the other had fishing gear, wood for chopping and other recreational tools.



(Photos of the outside of the whare and the marakai).

Nutrition and rangatiratanga promotes mokopuna wellbeing

There is an allocated weekly grocery budget of \$350 for kai in the whare and mokopuna are involved in menu planning. This empowers them with a sense of choice over what they would like to eat and serves as an educational opportunity. Mokopuna learn about budgeting, the importance of balanced meals, have input about the meals they want and are involved in



cooking and cleaning. Kaimahi shared that they teach mokopuna how to cook various meals that they can make when they are back in the community and to prepare for their whānau. This was evident during the visit as mokopuna and kaimahi were preparing venison for dinner and mokopuna had learnt how to make meatballs. Kaimahi said it also provides mokopuna with the opportunity to be exposed to new kai they may have not tried or been aware of.

The kitchen is well-stocked with fresh kai, such as eggs and bread being provided by a local dairy and helps ensure the quality and sustainability of meals. Kaimahi we met had a love for cooking and will also bring in fresh meat and kaimoana from hunting and diving, to share with mokopuna and provide them with the opportunity to learn how to prepare and cook kai. Throughout the visit, kaimahi emphasised how they would love for mokopuna to be a part of the whole process from gathering the kai to preparing a meal.

Mokopuna enjoy the kai, as we heard from mokopuna "*it's mean*" and that they are encouraged to try new and different kai. The emphasis on healthy eating and involving mokopuna in decision-making around kai fosters their development of life skills, rangatiratanga and becoming self-sufficient. In this regard, the whare is again equipping them with valuable life-skills that they are being supported to develop while on remand there.



Activities and access to others

This domain focuses on the opportunities available to mokopuna to engage in quality, youth friendly activities inside and outside secure facilities, including education and vocational activities. It is concerned with how the personal development of mokopuna is supported, including contact with friends and whānau.

Offsite activities not occurring impacts on mokopuna experience of Whare Pūmau Mana

Offsite activities at Whare Pūmau Mana were once a regular and important part of mokopuna engagement, offering opportunities for physical activity, cultural connection, supporting transitions back into the community and becoming self-sufficient. Activities such as fishing, eeling, swimming, and diving not only fostered mokopuna sense of achievement, but also allowed them to experience the world outside of the whare, gaining valuable life skills in the process. However, following an incident in October 2023 during an offsite visit, where an altercation occurred between mokopuna and members of the public, the decision was made by Te Ikaroa Rangatahi Social Services to cancel all offsite activities, and these have not been reinstated since. Mana Mokopuna observed a noticeable decline in morale, with mokopuna and kaimahi being confined to the whare since our last monitoring visit.

One mokopuna voiced *"it's ratchet³³ and there should be something, so I'm not in the house all day."* This reflects the negative impact that the loss of offsite activities has had on mokopuna engagement and well-being. While kaimahi have been creative in bringing activities into the whare such as deer processing and fishing. These replacement activities do not provide mokopuna with the full experience, as mokopuna now only participate in the final stages of activities, such as filleting fish without the satisfaction of catching them.

This takes away the sense of accomplishment, engagement, learning and connection to the processes involved for mokopuna. The loss of these meaningful experiences creates further frustration and boredom expressed by mokopuna, as activities become repetitive. For example, we observed this through mokopuna and kaimahi playing multiple games of pool. Although kaimahi in the whare are very skilled, creative and innovative, this only goes so far with the limited resources they are provided and does not replace the opportunities for offsite engagement for mokopuna – which also provides them with time in the outdoors and spaces outside of the whare, which are positive for overall well-being.

The removal of offsite activities, such as fishing, eeling, and swimming hold significant cultural value for Māori due to connection to whenua, and by limiting these opportunities this is

³³ Youth slang to express frustration or dislike about something or someone.

running contrary to upholding tino rangatiratanga, as mokopuna are denied meaningful cultural experiences that contribute to their identity and well-being.

The impact of cancelling offsite activities for all mokopuna in Whare Pūmau Mana undermines Article 31³⁴ of the UNCRC and Article 2 Te Tiriti o Waitangi, which guarantee mokopuna the right to engage in cultural, recreational and leisure activities, as well as the protection of Māori cultural practices and tino rangatiratanga.

Addressing resource gaps can enhance mokopuna care

Mokopuna have access to a range of resources that are in the whare. However, mokopuna would benefit from additional resources and existing resources being maintained, to prevent mokopuna from being bored given offsites have been cancelled. An example of this was during the Mana Mokopuna OPCAT Monitoring visit, sports equipment such as basketballs were flat due to not having a ball pump at the whare. Additionally, resources are at times being brought into the whare through the personal efforts and skills of kaimahi. Kaimahi said they were happy to do this and were doing this because they genuinely care about mokopuna in the whare and did not want them to be bored. However, this highlighted the reliance on kaimahi innovation and resourcefulness to maintain a range of activities for mokopuna, in the absence of offsite activities. Despite these challenges, the overall environment is positive and continues to offer mokopuna a safe, engaging, and a supportive space that is helping them to develop.

Mana Mokopuna recommends that Whare Pūmau Mana ensures existing resources are maintained and provides additional resources to alleviate the pressures off kaimahi and to support mokopuna wellbeing – including through their right to rest, recreation and play. This should also help to alleviate mokopuna boredom.



(Photo of the backyard at the whare).

³⁴ [Convention on the Rights of the Child | OHCHR](#)



Whānau engagement is valued at Whare Pūmau Mana

Whare Pūmau Mana recognises the importance of whānau involvement and fosters strong whānau connections³⁵. Whānau visits to mokopuna in the whare are encouraged, with weekends dedicated to allowing whānau to spend quality time with their mokopuna onsite, supervised by kaimahi working in the whare. Kaimahi are strong advocates in ensuring mokopuna have access with their whānau and remove barriers to this, whilst ensuring tikanga, safety and well-being during these visits. Mokopuna regularly engage with whānau through phone calls and in-person visits. On special occasions, such as birthdays, whānau are invited to the whare to celebrate, helping mokopuna feel connected and supported. Kaimahi also use these visits to highlight mokopuna progress and achievements, creating a positive and inclusive environment. During the OPCAT Monitoring visit, Mana Mokopuna observed whānau of a mokopuna who lived in the rōhe dropping off a PlayStation 4 as an additional activity for their mokopuna to engage in. The kaimahi were welcoming and open for whānau to come in and spend some time with their mokopuna.

These efforts align with Articles 3 of the UNCRC (the best interests of children should be a primary consideration in all actions concerning them), and Article 7 (right to know and be cared for by parents) and Article 8 (right to preserve identity), and it is positive that Whare Pūmau Mana is making efforts to ensure mokopuna are safe, supported, and engaged during whānau visits.

This practice reflects Article 2 of Te Tiriti o Waitangi, as it acknowledges and safeguards mokopuna right to maintain their whānau relationships and cultural identity, ensuring these are not severed, even within a care environment.

Some of the challenges experienced by mokopuna and kaimahi regarding whānau contact are that when whānau are unwilling, unavailable, or live out of region, this makes whānau support and maintaining whānau connection challenging. However, kaimahi in the whare persist, and their ability to maintain strong, consistent whānau connections is crucial for mokopuna well-being and building a healthy transition back to their whānau and hāpori. The strengthening of these relationships, coupled with proactive support for whānau, provides mokopuna with the stability they need to thrive in their journey and maintain their sense of identity and whakapapa.

³⁵ Refer to section 5(c) [Oranga Tamariki Act 1989 No 24 \(as at 30 June 2024\), Public Act General principles – New Zealand Legislation](#)



This aligns with Article 3 of Te Tiriti o Waitangi, as it ensures mokopuna are able to fully participate in the relationships that are critical to their growth and sense of belonging, enhancing their overall wellbeing with their whānau and hāpori.

A practical approach to education creates positive experiences for mokopuna

As the monitoring visit took place during the school holidays, the Monitoring team was unable to observe interactions between akonga and their kaiako in the whare. However, we did obtain information from Te Aho o te Kura Pounamu³⁶ regarding how education was run, and the outcomes achieved by mokopuna.

Kaimahi at Whare Pūmau Mana work using a kaupapa Māori framework to establish trust with mokopuna that focuses on self-esteem, resilience, and well-being. Kaiako build on this and create individualised education programmes tailored to mokopuna needs, interests, and goals which continues to produce positive learning outcomes for mokopuna. These include basic literacy and numeracy achievements, improved social skills, resilience, and positive overall engagement with learning. For example, kaimahi said that one tamaiti in particular made good progress with their kaiako building social skills and awareness to the extent that they chose to stay at the whare rather than abscond, due to their positive experiences in learning.

Te Aho o te Kura Pounamu provide a range of tailored activities in the following areas:

- Literacy
- Social Studies and current events
- Numeracy
- Financial Literacy
- Te Reo Māori
- SMART Goals that include workplace safety, social, and life skills.

Kaimahi shared that the practical approach to learning is better suited to the needs of mokopuna in the whare than a theory-based curriculum. There is also strong emphasis on mokopuna leadership through Te Aho o te Kura Pounamu and kaiako encourage mokopuna to take ownership of their education and focus on achievable goals. Photographs were displayed throughout the dining room and kitchen highlighting mokopuna participating in various activities, including cooking, woodwork, and goal setting. By embedding innovative and practical educational plans and empowering Whare Pūmau Mana kaimahi to support mokopuna, the education programme helps mokopuna to develop the skills and confidence needed for reintegration into education or employment within their communities when they leave the whare. The main challenges reported by kaimahi working for Te Ikaroa Rangatahi

³⁶ [Home | Te Aho o Te Kura Pounamu](#)



Social Services, is in relation to getting comprehensive education assessments, providing continuity for mokopuna and their individualised education plans, and meaningful pathway plans to support transition once mokopuna leave the whare. Kaimahi also provided information that outlined challenges with the recent changes to NCEA Achievement Standards, which would require earlier enrolment and longer stays at the whare to be successful. This does not align with the needs of mokopuna, who typically have shorter stays at Whare Pūmau Mana. Additionally, the ongoing uncertainty surrounding funding beyond June 2025 poses risks to the programme's sustainability.



Medical services and care

This domain focuses on how the physical and mental health rights and needs of mokopuna are met, in order to uphold their wellbeing, privacy and dignity.

Urgent training procedures and coordination is needed to meet the medical care for mokopuna at Whare Pūmau Mana

Kaimahi are not authorised to take mokopuna offsite for medical attention, only Oranga Tamariki Social Workers have the authority to do so. Kaimahi from Whare Pūmau Mana and Oranga Tamariki social workers coordinate any offsite appointments and after-hours care as needed. If a mokopuna requires medical care after hours, Whare Pūmau Mana tikanga is to contact the supervisor who ensures proper medical support is arranged through the Oranga Tamariki National Contact Centre. Although kaimahi are equipped with first aid training, serious medical situations may require urgent intervention when a call needs to be made immediately. Kaimahi said that often when they contact Oranga Tamariki or emergency services during after hours, there can be long wait periods impacting on mokopuna receiving timely access to medical care.

For medication-related matters, where kaimahi are entrusted with administering medication. It is essential to ensure that kaimahi at Whare Pūmau Mana are aware of how to administer medications and their purposes. During the visit, kaimahi said they have been utilising online resources, such as Google, to learn how to administer medication and understand what the medication is for. This shows dedication on the part of the kaimahi, however is concerning, given that they should be receiving appropriate and effective professional training to ensure they are able to undertake these duties safely and in ways that will uphold mokopuna health.

Mana Mokopuna recommends that urgent training procedures and coordination are implemented at Whare Pūmau Mana. This should focus on ensuring where kaimahi know how to administer medication and mokopuna medical needs are met in a timely, appropriate manner that supports the health and safety of mokopuna, whilst maintaining the integrity and mana of the whare through effective coordination and oversight of medical care.

All remand homes, including Whare Pūmau Mana, should have the ability to escort mokopuna to and from medical services when the need arises. Individual remand homes should have assigned medical centres to ensure mokopuna get the care they are entitled to, and mokopuna should be registered with the medical centres noting that they are in the care of Oranga Tamariki. All mokopuna have the right to the highest attainable standard of health under Article 24 of the Children's Convention.³⁷

³⁷ [Convention on the Rights of the Child | OHCHR](#)



Appendix One

Progress on 2022 recommendations

The following table provides an assessment of the recommendations made by Mana Mokopuna for the previous full monitoring visit to Whare Pūmau Mana carried out in August 2022. Mana Mokopuna acknowledges that work on systemic recommendations is led at the Oranga Tamariki National Office level. The progress detailed here relates only to the day-to-day operations of this whare.

2022 Systemic Recommendations

	2022 Recommendation	Progress as at October 2024
1	Support community run remand homes to develop an independent complaints system.	No Progress – Whare Pūmau Mana has an internal complaints system, if mokopuna want to make a complaint about their care and this is not independent.
2	Support community run remand homes to develop a process that will enable independent youth advocates to provide services to mokopuna in the whare.	Limited Progress - There has been limited progress in developing a process systemically that enables independent youth advocates to provide services to mokopuna in the whare. Despite this Whare Pūmau Mana and VOYCE Whakarongo Mai have established a strong relationship where VOYCE is visiting the whare on a weekly basis to provide advocacy support for mokopuna.
3	Develop a nationwide package of training programmes designed specifically for community run remand homes. Training programmes could include: <ul style="list-style-type: none">■ criminogenic risk factors■ mental health needs■ intellectual disability■ neurodiversity■ alcohol and drug support■ life skills, and■ cultural development/ capacity building.	No progress – Kaimahi are receiving minimal training and have emphasised the need for comprehensive training to support mokopuna who have mental health needs, complex needs, and neurodiversity. Furthermore, that training is to occur on a regular basis to equip them to meet mokopuna care needs.
4	Provide all relevant information in the referral documentation. This includes, but is not limited to: <ul style="list-style-type: none">■ up to date All About Me plan■ safety plans■ other specialist reports.	Limited Progress – There continues to be on-going concerns around the lack of up-to-date information regarding mokopuna and their needs. The absence of up-to-date All About Me plans, safety plans, and specialist reports has led to gaps in understanding the specific needs of mokopuna, hindering effective support and care planning in community-run remand homes.
5.	Oranga Tamariki site social workers regularly review s238(1)(d) custody statuses as per s242(1A) of the Oranga Tamariki Act 1989. This information should be shared with the remand home and used to inform transitions.	Limited Progress – Whare Pūmau Mana has established a strong partnership with the local Youth Justice Oranga Tamariki social workers, who have a dedicated kaimahi who completes the remand checks. However, concerns continue to remain around mokopuna, particularly those from out of the region continuing to spend long periods of time on remand, with minimal planning and communication from their key allocated social workers, particularly those mokopuna who have been placed out of their home region. This promotes institutionalisation with the long duration of remand periods.



2022 Facility Recommendations

	Recommendation	Progress as at October 2024
1	Train all kaimahi who work in the whare to use the PARTH model	Limited Progress – Kaimahi are trained in using the <i>PARTH</i> model. However, due to the lack of information and planning for mokopuna from Oranga Tamariki, kaimahi are unable to implement this model into practice due to the inability to set goals as there are often no plans in place for mokopuna.
2	Provide formal supervision and complete professional development plans for kaimahi.	No progress - Kaimahi continue to express the need for more frequent and structured supervision, including both professional and cultural support, this has yet to be implemented.
3	Involve mokopuna in their care plan and in decisions that affect them.	No progress - has been made in involving mokopuna in their care plans and decisions that affect them, because of the lack of information received from Oranga Tamariki site social workers.



Appendix Two

Gathering information

Mana Mokopuna gathered a range of information and evidence to support the analysis and develop findings for this report. These collectively form the basis of our recommendations.

Method	Role
Interviews and informal discussions with mokopuna.	
Interviews and informal discussions with kaimahi and external stakeholders	<ul style="list-style-type: none">General ManagerManagerQuality LeadSupervisorShift LeadersResidential Youth WorkersKaiwhakamana VOYCE WhakarongomaiTeam Leader VOYCE WhakarongomaiVolunteerPolice Youth AidOranga Tamariki Youth Justice SupervisorMokopuna
Documentation	<ul style="list-style-type: none">Kawa for Whare Pūmau ManaTikanga for Whare Pūmau ManaPolicies for Whare Pūmau ManaRangatahi Safety PlanChild Protection PolicyWhare Action PlanWhare Shift PlanIncident ReportRemand home admissions booklet
Observations and engagements with mokopuna	<ul style="list-style-type: none">Observations occurred across shifts. This included shift handovers, mealtimes, activities, mokopuna engagements with kaimahi and VOYCE Whakarongomai.