



**Response from Oranga Tamariki and Te Ikaroa
Rangatahi Social Services to recommendations from
the Mana Mokopuna monitoring visit to:**

Whare Pūmau Mana Remand Home

Visit date – October 2024

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Introduction

Whare Pūmau Mana Youth Justice Community Remand Home (Whare Pūmau Mana), which is run by Te Ikaroa Rangatahi Social Services Inc. (TIRSS). Whare Pūmau Mana is a remand home located in the Heretaunga rohe for mokopuna/rangatahi typically aged 14 to 17 years. TIRSS whakapapa to Ngāti Kahungunu and when possible, prioritises the admission of rangatahi into their whare who whakapapa to this iwi.

TIRSS is a community-based kaupapa Māori organisation which works to provide safe practices and environments for the fostering, promotion and advancing tino rangatiratanga (autonomy, self-determination, and self-management) of tamariki, rangatahi and whānau in all areas of their lives. TIRSS champions the importance of whakapapa and whakawhanaungatanga; an approach grounded in Te Tiriti o Waitangi and Ngāti Kahungunu tikanga. Oranga Tamariki—Ministry for Children (Oranga Tamariki) contracts TIRSS to provide Whare Pūmau Mana.

Whare Pūmau Mana has capacity to take three rangatahi tāne (males). Under the Oranga Tamariki Act 1989, the legal status under which rangatahi are detained at Whare Pūmau Mana is section 238(1)(d) - custody of child or young person pending hearing.

The purpose of the visit was to assess the quality of services provided by Oranga Tamariki and TIRSS against the seven domains relevant to the Mana Mokopuna | Children & Young People's Commission (Mana Mokopuna) role as a National Preventive Mechanism under the Optional Protocol to the Convention Against Torture and Cruelty (OPCAT). The seven domains are:

- Domain 1: Treatment
- Domain 2: Protection systems
- Domain 3: Material conditions
- Domain 4: Activities and contact with others
- Domain 5: Medical services and care
- Domain 6: Personnel
- Domain 7: Improving outcomes for mokopuna Māori.

The draft OPCAT report was shared with Oranga Tamariki and TIRSS on 20 December 2024. Oranga Tamariki and TIRSS have work in partnership to prepare this joint response to the Systemic and Facility Recommendations.

Recommendations Summary

The OPCAT report shows that Mana Mokopuna did not find evidence of ill-treatment during their visit to Whare Pūmau Mana. Mana Mokopuna made 13 recommendations, six systemic of a systemic nature to Oranga Tamariki and seven specific to the Whare Pūmau Mana. These have all been accepted by Oranga Tamariki and TIRSS respectively.

In their report, Mana Mokopuna made a range of positive observations about the high quality of care rangatahi were receiving at Whare Pūmau Mana. There were also concerns noted by Mana Mokopuna regarding Oranga Tamariki social work practice for rangatahi at Whare Pūmau Mana.

TIRSS and Oranga Tamariki are committed to strengthening practice as a priority and we continue to work towards ensuring consistent, quality practice, that is inclusive, collaborative, culturally responsive and meets the needs of tamariki and rangatahi. We are committed to achieving better outcomes for tamariki and rangatahi and we value the feedback and insights provided by Mana Mokopuna.

Recommendations	Status
Oranga Tamariki Systemic Recommendations	
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.	Accepted
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.	Accepted
3. Ensure social workers adhere to their practice responsibilities for mokopuna and minimum contact visits as per Oranga Tamariki Policy.	Accepted
4. Ensure All About Me Plans are up to date as per the Oranga Tamariki policy and provided to Whare Pūmau Mana prior to admission.	Accepted
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	Accepted
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.	Accepted
Te Ikaroa Rangatahi Social Services Facility Recommendations	
1. Continue enhancing whānau and iwi involvement in mokopuna care to strengthen whakapapa connections that support their holistic wellbeing.	Accepted
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.	Accepted
3. Implement documentation processes and practices that ensure all care plans, shift reports and notes are detailed, accurate and not pre-signed.	Accepted
4. Leadership to prioritise and provide consistent support, guidance, and communication to ensure that kaimahi feel valued and equipped to meet the needs	Accepted

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.	Accepted
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.	Accepted
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.	Accepted

The Oranga Tamariki and TIRSS responses to the Whare Pūmau Mana OPCAT report recommendations are detailed in the remaining sections of this report.

Response to Oranga Tamariki Systemic Recommendations

Below are the Oranga Tamariki responses to the systemic recommendations made in the Whare Pūmau Mana OPCAT report.

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.

Response

It is a statutory requirement that rangatahi who are placed on a remand order by the Youth Court and stay in an Oranga Tamariki-run or contracted service are reviewed by their social worker every 14 days. The purpose of this is to establish if the rangatahi needs to be brought back to the Youth Court to determine whether another custody status under section 238 would be appropriate if an alternative placement option is available. The first review is done by way of a family group conference. The youth justice social worker will complete any subsequent reviews and rangatahi are encouraged to participate.

The completion of these reviews is crucial as the Oranga Tamariki Act 1989 requires a 'child or young person who commits an offence or is alleged to have committed an offence to be kept in the community so far as that is practicable and consistent with the need to ensure the safety of the public'; and 'that any sanctions imposed should take the least restrictive form appropriate in the circumstances.' Practice guidance is provided by Oranga Tamariki for social workers on 14-day remand reviews, which includes what a review is, when a review happens, who does and how to do it.

Responsibility for monitoring performance in relation to the completion of 14-day remand reviews sits with the newly established National Homes team within the Youth Justice Services and Residential Care (YJSRC) services group. This is a new team set up as part of our new organisation operating approach that has a dedicated focus on community home services. Reporting of the completion of remand reviews by the Community Homes team is an organisational priority and forms part of organisation-wide compliance reporting provided to our Executive Leadership team.

To further support compliance with the completion of 14-day remand reviews, the National Homes team, with support of YJSRC is currently piloting a Home's Visiting Tool in remand homes, which is available on a mobile app for relevant staff involved with this practice. This tool will support increased monitoring of visits to remand homes, and corresponding 14-day remand reviews, and will help support addressing issues as they arise in a much timelier manner. This tool is already in place for other care homes and is being used successfully, and we anticipate that it will be effective for remand home visits and reviews.

The National Homes team will review the use of visiting tool in remand homes after six months and make any necessary changes based on feedback with a view to permanently embedding this solution.

Recommendation 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.

Response

Oranga Tamariki acknowledges the importance of providing TIRSS, or any provider-run service, with a current All About Me Plan (AAMP) in a timely manner when a referral is made by Oranga Tamariki to place a rangatahi in their service. Clearly communicating key information to a service provider with key about a rangatahi is crucial for helping them understand the individual needs of a rangatahi, and the impact this may have on their care while in a community home.

The AAMP is designed to enable Oranga Tamariki to support and respond to the needs of tamariki and rangatahi in care in line with the National Care Standards. This in effect is their care plan. The YJSRC team admissions function request a copy of the AAMP at the time of referral to a remand home. The AAMP helps everyone involved support the needs and objectives of tamariki or rangatahi, by recording

planning information that is responsive to their changing needs and circumstances and advances their long-term goals and outcomes.

There is also a tamariki-version of the AAMP. This is written in language appropriate to the age, development level or disability of te tamaiti or rangatahi, to ensure they understand it. Where possible, it is important that te tamaiti or rangatahi are involved in developing the look and feel of their version of the AAMP to help them better understand it.

Oranga Tamariki places a lot of emphasis on social workers involving tamariki and rangatahi in planning about them. Detailed practice guidance on the tamariki AAMP is available for social workers, which is further supported by our 'Participation of tamariki' policy, which requires that tamariki have the information and support they need to freely express their views and actively participate in the work we do with them.

The National Homes team have worked with the broader national admission function within YJSRC to improve the consistency and quality of information provided to partners at the time of admission, which includes Whare Pūmau Mana and the other remand homes. This also involves continuing to work closely with our partners to strengthen the process around information sharing at the point of a referral being made to any community home.

The National Homes team also has attends a monthly hui, Te Ropū Katiuia, chaired by remand home and bail home providers. This forum is used to provide Oranga Tamariki with feedback and supports providers to raise any concerns they have. The National Homes team remain committed to strengthening communication for care planning.

Recommendation 3

Ensure social workers adhere to their practice responsibilities for mokopuna and minimum contact visits as per Oranga Tamariki Policy.

Response

All tamariki in care are entitled to be visited by their social worker. This includes their Care and Protection Social Worker for tamariki and rangatahi involved with Oranga Tamariki because they are in need of Care and Protection as well as Youth Justice matters. This is set out in regulation 27 of the Oranga Tamariki (National Care Standards and Related Matters) Regulations 2018 (the National Care Standards). Improving social worker visits to tamariki in care is a priority for our Minister and a key deliverable in our Implementation Plan.

Our policy and guidance state that the frequency of visits to tamariki and rangatahi is based on an assessment of their individual needs and contact will regularly take place in between kanohi ki te kanohi visits. The frequency of face-to-face visits is determined in consultation with tamariki and rangatahi, their carer and, wherever possible, their whānau. Once the frequency of visits has been determined, the rationale for this needs to be approved by the social worker's supervisor and recorded in case notes. The frequency of visits should also be recorded in the AAMP to ensure the tamariki/rangatahi knows what is planned. The number of visits must be reviewed regularly, including when there has been a change in the circumstance or needs of the tamariki or rangatahi. The AAMP must be updated if the frequency is altered to ensure it reflects the needs and wishes of the tamariki/rangatahi.

Visits to tamariki and rangatahi in care, regardless of their care arrangement, are a priority focus for Oranga Tamariki. The quality of visiting practice is regularly reviewed by our national quality assurance function and this forms part of the compliance reporting provided to our Executive Leadership team.

Oranga Tamariki have, and continue to, undertake work to support regular engagements with tamariki in care, including when they are residing in a residence or community home. This includes:

- Expectations about visiting rangatahi have been shared with all Youth Justice kaimahi by senior regional leaders including:
 - That tamariki and rangatahi placed in a Youth Justice Residence or Community Home should as a minimum have weekly contact with their social worker.
 - In addition to weekly contact, a monthly face to face contact is required as a minimum unless there are compelling reasons for this not to happen. Where monthly face to face visits cannot occur for compelling reasons approval for contact via electronic means e.g. Teams or Skype or phone must be obtained from the YJ Site Manager.

- By exception a co-worker allocated from the closest site can be considered for face-to-face contact if there is an anticipated lengthy remand or sentence. This would involve negotiation with the nearest site, be assessed on a case-by-case basis, and in best interests of rangatahi and for continuity of relationship.
- Any exceptions to face to face monthly contact in addition to approval by the YJ Site Manager must be documented and recorded in CYRAS.
- The Homes Visiting Tool, which is currently being piloted through a mobile app for relevant staff. As noted in Recommendation 1, this tool will support monitoring of visits to the homes and will support addressing issues as they arise. This is a tool already in place for other care homes.

Recommendation 4

Ensure All About Me Plans are up to date as per the Oranga Tamariki policy and provided to Whare Pūmau Mana prior to admission.

Response

Oranga Tamariki acknowledges the importance of providing provider-run remand homes, including Whare Pūmau Mana, with a current All About Me Plan (AAMP). Please also refer to our response to Recommendation 2 for more information on AAMPs.

Generally, before an admission to a community home, the social worker will update or commence a social work assessment and an AAMP to help support the transition of a rangatahi to Whare Pūmau Mana, or any new care arrangement. This includes ensuring rangatahi, their whānau and caregivers are all involved in this planning process, and that these plans are recorded in CYRAS (our information management system) so that they can be accessed by a range of staff.

The importance of ensuring current information is provided in AMMPs continues to be communicated locally in site offices as part of our general practice requirements. This can occur in a range of forums including during supervision, in practice conversations, and in training.

However, it is important to note that there are exceptions or times when referrals can be made at short notice after a rangatahi is arrested by the Police, and some information may not be available until the next day or after the weekend. This can occur when a referral is made outside of business hours. This can also occur when a rangatahi is not previously known to Oranga Tamariki and new information needs to be obtained before this can be given to a provider run service.

Recommendation 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

Response

Oranga Tamariki and TIRSS have identified multiple challenges in relation to being able to take rangatahi offsite safely. These primarily include issues relating to staffing and recruitment, as well as challenges with local relationships and perceptions from Police and other organisations.

One of the issues identified by TIRSS in relation to recruitment was the length of time it is taking for Police Vetting checks to return. Due to the length of time this process can take, TIRSS are losing good candidates for these positions. Oranga Tamariki has offered support to TIRSS to aid in recruitment through the provision of fast-tracking potential staff Police Vetting, to assist them to expedite their recruitment process.

On 14 February 2025 we held a kanohi ki te kanohi hui with local Police to build relationships and ensure offsite activities can take place safely. This is important, as part of the function of a remand home is to support rangatahi to successfully transition back to their community, with offsite events providing a valuable opportunity to learn prosocial skills in the community when the appropriate safety mechanisms are in place to support this.

TIRSS and Hawkes Bay Police agreed to develop a Local Service Agreement to ensure that there is a joint understanding of procedures that need to be undertaken in relation to Police attendance and contact regarding TIRSS and the Whare Pūmana Mana remand home.

The hui has helped ensure all stakeholders involved have a clearer understanding of roles and responsibilities when ensuring safe practices for offsite excursions. Alongside streamlining vetting for recruitment, this will enable more offsite events to be made available.

Recommendation 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.

Response

Oranga Tamariki recognises the importance of ensuring access to medical services for tamariki and rangatahi in care. Good health is essential to wellbeing and positive life outcomes. We need to support tamariki and rangatahi to access health services, both to maintain their good health and to meet any health and disability needs.

We will continue to work alongside TIRSS to ensure medical appointments are taking place as soon as possible either kanohi ki te kanohi or virtually. As noted in our response to Recommendation 5, we have identified that accessing medical care in a timely manner relates to the same staffing challenges TIRSS have with taking rangatahi offsite. With the work that is occurring to address staffing at Whare Pūmau Mana, once completed we anticipate that this recommendation will also be addressed.

Response to Te Ikaroa Rangatahi Social Services Facility Recommendations

Below are the TIRSS responses to the facility recommendations made in the Whare Pūmau Mana OPCAT report.

Recommendation 1

Continue enhancing whānau and iwi involvement in mokopuna care to strengthen whakapapa connections that support their holistic wellbeing.

Response

TIRSS work closely with each rangatahi in the remand home to support an understanding of their whakapapa and support the development of their pepeha. For rangatahi of Ngati Kahungunu descent, our Kaiarahi works alongside rangatahi to understand their whakapapa and learn tipuna, places and locations of significance to their whakapapa.

Wherever possible, and with Oranga Tamariki consent, whānau are encouraged to visit rangatahi in the home. Visits are usually organised around kai, with rangatahi deciding the menu and playing a significant role in cooking for this.

Enhancing whānau connections is more difficult when rangatahi come from other regions. However, we have examples of overcoming this by working closely with Oranga Tamariki to facilitate whānau visits, teams call or phone calls.

Recommendation 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.

Response

In 2024, TIRSS provided training to kaimahi to address many of the challenges we faced that year from complex rangatahi behaviours. Training included trauma and trauma-based practice, self-harming and suicidal ideation, mental health in rangatahi, addictions, and neuro-diverse conditions and behaviours.

What we have learnt from that training is:

- Kaimahi themselves experienced trauma from working with rangatahi who self-harmed and demonstrated mental health and neuro-diverse behaviours.
- The most appropriate training was that delivered by the Oranga Tamariki YJ supervisor. The reason for this was her understanding and knowledge of the context of rangatahi youth justice. She also understood rangatahi with dual status of YJ and care and protection.
- One area of training we did not consider at that time was criminology.

It is our intention to follow up with the YJ supervisor to schedule training for 2025. One of the issues we face is that we need to train Whare Pūmau Mana staff together and this can only happen if the whare is empty or we can organise to have the rangatahi undertaking other activities that day.

This is a priority for TIRSS.

Recommendation 3

Implement documentation processes and practices that ensure all care plans, shift reports and notes are detailed, accurate and not pre-signed.

Response

TIRSS has undertaken a review of administrative processes in Whare Pūmau Mana, which found these processes were fit for purpose and that further clarity was required for kaimahi regarding the requirements of

this. Training has been undertaken by the supervisors on the client database, "Excess". This ensures that they understand and comply with reporting requirements.

We have a kanohi ki te kanohi handover at the end of each shift involving all shift staff. This ensures all information is shared that will inform the next shift. Paperwork must be completed at the end of each shift, including shift reports. Shift plans must be handed over with completion or carry over tasks noted.

We have removed any opportunity for pre-signing forms.

Recommendation 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.

Response

Building and supporting leadership to fulfil their roles is a priority. In 2024 we had a change at a supervisor level which is now having a positive impact on management and relationships at Whare Pūmau Mana. We have undertaken a review of job descriptions and are about to complete performance appraisals of management and kaimahi.

Training for Pou and Supervisor leadership level has also commenced from January 2025.

We have appointed new kaimahi roles in the Remand and Bail Homes in recognition of the work undertaken in health and safety and civil defence preparation. We are also providing training for identified kaimahi who show leadership skills. We recognise that some kaimahi were traumatised by rangatahi behaviours in 2024. In response, we have implemented external supervision for all Whare Pūmau Mana kaimahi. We are also seeking more discussion with Oranga Tamariki at the referral and intake phase to ensure we understand the needs of rangatahi entering the whare, and our kaimahi are confident to meet those needs.

Face-to-face communication is always prioritised within Whare Pūmau Mana. We also use messenger pages to communicate daily. Daily shift plans and handover hui ensure we communicate key information to the next shift to ensure consistent delivery of care.

Recommendation 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.

Response

Resources for activities have been purchased in response to some exciting programmes developed by kaimahi. For the more practical activities, kaimahi have brought in their own resources. For example, fishing nets to be mended, or engine parts to be renovated. These very practical examples are not so easily purchased but reflect the innovation of kaimahi. In our experience rangatahi enjoy the practical elements of programmes.

We have purchased art resources and resources to learn te reo Māori. These programmes are generally run in the afternoon and evening shift.

Recommendation 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.

Response

TIRSS commenced professional external supervision for all Whare Pūmau Mana kaimahi in January 2025. The Supervisor is an experienced social worker who provides supervision across the service. We will review progress in six months' time.

Ongoing cultural supervision and mentoring is provided on a daily basis as required from the Remand and Bail Home Supervisors and Team Leader. The Kaiwhakahaere also provides cultural training and support to all kaimahi across the service.

Fortnightly the Oranga Tamariki YJ Supervisor visits Whare Pūmau Mana and facilitates discussions with kaimahi about practice issues and/or practice excellence.

Recommendation 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.

Response

TIRSS currently has one experienced staff member available on a casual basis to backfill for staff unavailable for work. We also utilise kaimahi across our bail home to backfill for staff as required. We acknowledge that Oranga Tamariki has offered support to TIRSS to aid in recruitment through the provision of fast-tracking potential staff police vetting.

We acknowledge that a casual pool of kaimahi would be preferable but also acknowledge that contracts do not enable the employment of additional staff.

We have considered your recommendation and will recruit an additional residential youth worker to cover both Remand and Bail homes.