



# Korowai Manaaki Youth Justice Residence

## OPCAT Monitoring Report

Visit date: 30 October - 1 November 2024 and 29 January 2025

Report date: February 2025



# Kia kuru pounamu te rongō

## 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.

Please note that in this report, for clarity, we use the term 'mokopuna' to describe a group of children and young people, and 'tamaiti' for a specific child or young person.



# Contents

The role of Mana Mokopuna – Children and Young People’s Commission	4
About this Visit	4
About this Report	5
About this Facility	5
Concluding observations from the United Nations	6
OPCAT Monitoring Engagements with Korowai Manaaki	7
Communications with Oranga Tamariki	9
Summary of progress since the February 2024 visit	10
Detailed Key Findings	12
Update from the January 2025 one day monitoring visit	24
Update from the stakeholder hui held in January 2025	31
Appendix One – Gathering information	33



# 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 an unannounced three day follow up visit to Korowai Manaaki Youth Justice Residence (Korowai) between 30 October – 1 November 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.

The Mana Mokopuna OPCAT monitoring team has been keeping a watching brief on Korowai Manaaki following concerns raised during the most recent full unannounced visit undertaken by the team in February 2024. The purpose of this unannounced follow-up visit was to check in and understand progress against the recommendations made following the February visit, and assess progress being made to prevent harm and maintain safety for mokopuna who are placed in Korowai Manaaki. We also used the visit to kōrero (talk) with mokopuna, kaimahi and external stakeholders regarding their experiences in the residence since February 2024,



and to follow up on concerns raised directly with Mana Mokopuna about Korowai Manaaki by members of the public since the February 2024 full visit.

The OPCAT monitoring team conducted an additional one day drop in visit to understand progress made against the Oranga Tamariki action plan for the residence that was established after the November 2024 visit. This recent information has also been incorporated at the conclusion of this report.

## About this report

This report outlines Mana Mokopuna's assessment of progress in Korowai Manaaki against the summary of findings documented in the previous full monitoring report on the unannounced OPCAT monitoring visit in February 2024<sup>1</sup>. This 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

<b>Facility Name:</b>	Korowai Manaaki Youth Justice Residence, operated by Oranga Tamariki
<b>Region:</b>	Tāmaki Makaurau (Auckland)
<b>Operating capacity:</b>	46 bed capacity.  Korowai Manaaki is made up of five secure units, where mokopuna live. These contain, bedrooms, bathrooms, dining area, kitchen, television room and rooms for mokopuna to regulate and have phone calls. There is one further unit designated to Secure Care. There were 32 mokopuna on-site at the time of the November 2024 visit.  There were 31 mokopuna onsite at the time of the 'drop in' visit in January 2025.
<b>Status under which mokopuna are detained:</b> Oranga Tamariki Act 1989 – s235, s238(1)(d) and s311, Criminal Procedure Act 2011 – s173 and s175, sentenced under the Corrections Act 2004 – s34A.	

<sup>1</sup> [Korowai Manaaki monitoring report | Mana Mokopuna](#)



# 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 Observations<sup>2</sup> for New Zealand's sixth periodic review on its implementation of the Children's Convention<sup>3</sup> 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 Observations<sup>4</sup> for New Zealand's seventh periodic review regarding the implementation of the Convention against Torture and Other Cruel, Inhuman or Degrading Treatment or Punishment<sup>5</sup>.

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

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<sup>2</sup> Refer CRC/C/NZL/CO/6 [G2302344 \(3\).pdf](#)

<sup>3</sup> [Convention on the Rights of the Child | OHCHR](#)

<sup>4</sup> Refer CAT/C/NZL/CO/7 [G2315464.pdf](#)

<sup>5</sup> [Convention against Torture and Other Cruel, Inhuman or Degrading Treatment or Punishment | OHCHR](#)



# OPCAT Monitoring engagements with Korowai Manaaki

## Timeline of Events

- February 2024 full OPCAT monitoring visit
- November 2024 follow up OPCAT monitoring visit
- January 2025 one day drop in OPCAT monitoring visit

## Detail of events

When Mana Mokopuna undertook its most recent full unannounced OPCAT monitoring visit at Korowai Manaaki in February 2024, we found no evidence of cruel, inhuman, degrading treatment or punishment (ill-treatment). However, Mana Mokopuna noted there were serious concerns regarding kaimahi practice at Korowai Manaaki, with a pressing need for stable leadership to improve the overall culture of the residence to ensure both the safety and care of mokopuna, and the safety of kaimahi working in the facility.

Due to the nature of the concerns documented in our February 2024 report – which followed on from a long-standing background of previous concerns raised through OPCAT monitoring of Korowai Manaaki – Mana Mokopuna has been in regular communication with members of the Oranga Tamariki senior leadership team at the National Office level to receive regular updates on residence action plans. Oranga Tamariki has been responsive to requests for information in relation to the situation for mokopuna at Korowai Manaaki, and regular hui were held between Mana Mokopuna and Oranga Tamariki with an OPCAT monitoring focus on Korowai Manaaki throughout the course of 2024, leading up to this November 2024 follow-up visit occurring.

Since the February 2024 full unannounced OPCAT monitoring visit, Mana Mokopuna has been closely monitoring progress updates from Oranga Tamariki about Korowai Manaaki by:

- Analysing data received from Oranga Tamariki monthly.<sup>6</sup>
- Requesting information to ensure plans for mokopuna have been put in place to address concerns and prevent harm.
- Seeking clarity and asking what support and plans have been put in place when concerns are raised through the data received or when Oranga Tamariki informs us about serious incidents that have occurred.

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<sup>6</sup> Mana Mokopuna receives monthly data bundles from Oranga Tamariki including serious event notifications, report of concerns and safety and security incident reports.



- Engaging in fortnightly hui with Oranga Tamariki to seek updates on Korowai Manaaki.
- On-going communication with kaimahi and stakeholders that work in Korowai Manaaki about how the residence is progressing.

Mana Mokopuna found through this November 2024 follow-up OPCAT monitoring visit that there had been little progress made to address the concerns raised in February 2024 following the full visit. There were several systemic factors impacting on the progress to address the safety and care of mokopuna in the facility.

These included:

- A significant organisational restructure with several Oranga Tamariki roles being disestablished, new reporting lines and a reconfiguration of the Senior leadership team at Oranga Tamariki National office impacting on Youth Justice residential services.<sup>7</sup>
- Significant funding cuts across Oranga Tamariki operations, has had an impact on recruitment with key kaimahi roles within Korowai Manaaki not able to be filled within the leadership and clinical teams.
- An increase in admissions of mokopuna into Korowai Manaaki who have high and complex needs requiring specialist supports and interventions. Funding restrictions and reprioritisations have impacted on the availability and quality of programming, access to resources and specialist supports for mokopuna to rehabilitate and have their needs met whilst in Korowai Manaaki.
- Funding for tailored initiatives such as restoring the onsite wharehau for mokopuna to engage in wood carving, bone carving, and Toi Māori Arts continued to be on hold due to budget constraints and reprioritisation of funding across the residence. However, the vast majority of mokopuna in Korowai Manaaki whakapapa Māori. 28 of the 32 mokopuna placed in Korowai Manaaki at the time of this follow-up visit in November 2024 whakapapa Māori.

Of note, the weekend prior to our November OPCAT monitoring visit there had been an incident where mokopuna had accessed the roof of the facility. Whilst this was not the focus of the visit the OPCAT monitoring team did check on the wellbeing of those mokopuna who were placed back into Korowai Manaaki.

Korowai Manaaki requires an urgent overhaul based on an accelerated plan that addresses the on-going practice and safety concerns for mokopuna raised within previous Mana Mokopuna OPCAT monitoring reports relating to Korowai Manaaki in 2023 and 2024<sup>8</sup>. The overhaul requires a significant commitment to on-going resources, funding, support, and stability, particularly within the leadership team of the facility, to ensure a high standard of professional

<sup>7</sup> [Organisational-Restructure-Decision-Document-June-2024.pdf](#)

<sup>8</sup> [Reports | Mana Mokopuna](#)





practice by kaimahi. This is crucial to provide the best chance of positive progress occurring for mokopuna, within a mokopuna sense of time. Specific improvements need to occur in the areas of treatment, material conditions, therapeutic care, and safety when mokopuna are admitted into the residence.

## Communication with Oranga Tamariki National Senior Leadership about Korowai Manaaki since November 2024 follow-up visit:

- The conclusion of the November 2024 monitoring visit as per standard practice we reported to Oranga Tamariki senior leadership and the residence manager high level findings and concerns in real time.
- There was a further hui conducted between Mana Mokopuna OPCAT monitoring and Oranga Tamariki senior leadership at national office on 15 November 2024 to discuss the findings and concerns in detail.
- Since late November 2024 there had been several attempts via email to arrange a hui with members of the Senior Leadership team at Oranga Tamariki national office to discuss the findings of our monitoring visit and raise concerns that arose out of our analysis.
- On 22 January 2025 a hui occurred between the Acting OPCAT Team Manager, Mana Mokopuna, with a number of senior Oranga Tamariki leaders, namely the Acting Deputy Chief Executive Youth Justice Services and Residential Care, the Acting National Director Youth Justice Services and Residential Care, and the Manager Residential Services – Youth Justice from Oranga Tamariki. This hui focused on Mana Mokopuna providing further findings from the analysis of the evidence gathered as part of the follow-up visit in November 2024, and Mana Mokopuna further raised ongoing concerns regarding the safety and care of mokopuna at Korowai Manaaki.
- On 29 January 2025 the OPCAT monitoring team conducted a one day 'drop in' unannounced visit to assess progress against OPCAT report recommendations (given there had been minimal progress at the November 2024 visit) and against an accelerated Action Plan developed specifically for Korowai Manaaki. Concerns related to the safety of mokopuna and the care they received when living in the facility.
- The OPCAT monitoring team independently facilitated<sup>9</sup> a hui on 30 January 2025 for kaimahi and stakeholders to raise concerns directly to the above named Oranga Tamariki leaders as well as the Korowai Manaaki residence manager. This was requested from numerous stakeholders as an opportunity to directly raise their

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<sup>9</sup> Within the scope of the National Preventative Mechanism function there is the ability to collaborate with detaining authorities and any other relevant stakeholders (in this case members of the Oranga Tamariki Youth Justice senior leadership group, residence leadership team and service providers) concerning prevention of harm or ill-treatment.



concerns to decision makers and to collectively focus on solutions to meet the needs of mokopuna and ensure safety at Korowai Manaaki.

- On 3 February 2025 a hui occurred between Mana Mokopuna OPCAT monitoring, members of the Korowai Manaaki leadership team and members of the Oranga Tamariki senior leadership team at national office to discuss the findings in detail from the one day 'drop in' unannounced visit.
- On 4 February 2025 a hui was conducted between Mana Mokopuna OPCAT monitoring and members of the Oranga Tamariki senior leadership team at national office to further discuss the findings from the 'drop in' visit, the stakeholder hui, and arrange a time to meet regularly so that progress updates can be provided.

## Summary of progress (as at November 2024 follow-up visit) on concerns raised in February 2024

### Work still to be done:

- Some kaimahi practice remains unprofessional, inconsistent, and puts mokopuna and kaimahi at risk of harm.
- Concerns around the safety and care of mokopuna at Korowai Manaaki continue to be escalated by kaimahi and external stakeholders<sup>10</sup> through the appropriate channels, however it is reported that concerns do not get addressed by Korowai Manaaki facility leadership, and the behaviours become normalised.
- Some mokopuna and kaimahi at Korowai Manaaki do not feel safe to speak up about poor practice and behaviour that is occurring within the residence, due to perceived risks to personal safety and potential repercussions that they believe it may have for them.
- Whānau have safety concerns for their mokopuna residing in Korowai Manaaki and are too scared to speak up about these concerns, due to potential negative impact this may have on their tamaiti whilst in the residence.
- There is a lack of consistent, transparent communication within the residence, and Korowai Manaaki is described by kaimahi as a 'hush hush', hostile, closed environment, where everything gets swept under the carpet.
- Some mokopuna are being held in secure care as it is deemed too much of a risk to their safety if they are placed into an open unit.

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<sup>10</sup> External stakeholders include anyone based outside of the residence delivering programmes and services to mokopuna.



- Secure care continues to be used on a regular basis, with grounds to keep mokopuna in secure care often not met and/ or poorly documented. This includes the use of regulation 48 of the Residential Care Regulations 1996<sup>11</sup> being inconsistently applied by different shift teams.
- Use of force reviews between May-July 2024 were not occurring consistently due to the CCTV footage not being immediately accessible<sup>12</sup> to senior leaders at Korowai Manaaki. Documentation during this period was found to be blank with no evidence available at the residence that reviews of force took place between May and July 2024.
- Contraband continues to be prevalent across all units within the residence, with mokopuna particularly using cannabis and vapes, and it is alleged that kaimahi as well as whānau are bringing it into the residence for mokopuna.
- Basic physiological rights and needs of mokopuna are not always being met, including having cold showers for three days in a row, not having access to clean linen, and not having enough kai (food).
- Mokopuna are bored, as some kaimahi across shifts are not implementing meaningful programmes to keep mokopuna engaged, and mokopuna are limited in their access to physical activity and the outdoors.
- Oranga Tamariki social workers are not maintaining contact with mokopuna via phone calls or regular visits. Some Family Group Conferences (FGC's) are being held online, rather than in person with cameras off.

## Positive progress since February 2024:

- A permanent residence manager has been appointed and has started working in the residence.
- There is a comprehensive school holiday programme developed by the programme co-ordinator for mokopuna to engage in over the summer 2024/2025 period.
- Accessibility and engagement with advocates for mokopuna has improved and is occurring regularly.
- Kingslea School continues to provide an engaging educational programme for mokopuna in the residence, with opportunities to achieve NCEA credits, including café days where mokopuna learn employment and life skills such as cooking and barista skills.
- The clinical team comprises of kaimahi who strongly advocate for mokopuna in Korowai Manaaki to ensure their needs are being met whilst in residence and when they transition into the community.

<sup>11</sup> [Oranga Tamariki \(Residential Care\) Regulations 1996 \(SR 1996/354\) \(as at 01 July 2023\) 48 Confinement to rooms of children and young persons in secure care – New Zealand Legislation](#)

<sup>12</sup> There was a reported issue with the servers during this time on which CCTV footage is stored. Requests had to be made directly to the service provider if CCTV footage was required.



- The residence had appointed their allocated FTE fulltime residential youth worker roles, and these were all employed through Oranga Tamariki with minimal need for kaimahi from contingency agencies being utilised.
- Rangatahi Youth Council<sup>13</sup> is occurring fortnightly in Korowai Manaaki, and despite serious incidents that do occur, the Council continues to operate to ensure consistency and routine for mokopuna.

## Detailed key findings November 2024

### Mokopuna and Kaimahi Safety at Korowai Manaaki

Members of the residence leadership team were transparent with Mana Mokopuna on the first day of the visit that there are still issues that exist on site regarding safety, and there is still along way to go in terms of progress. The residence manager told us that they had sent out communications to all on site to engage openly and transparently with Mana Mokopuna during the visit. However, on day two of the visit, the monitoring team was informed by some kaimahi that communications had been received by them to not speak with Mana Mokopuna during this OPCAT monitoring visit.

Kaimahi did not say who had communicated this information to them, but that they had been told not to speak with members of our monitoring team when they came on shift. This had filtered through to all the units in the residence, with the change in engagement with the Mana Mokopuna monitoring team evident through a lack of eye contact from kaimahi, kaimahi ignoring us when we were in units, answering direct questions from Mana Mokopuna with one-word answers, active avoidance of members of the Mana Mokopuna monitoring team, and no facilitation of mokopuna engagement by kaimahi with the Mana Mokopuna team. Mokopuna engagement varied, with many not engaging with Mana Mokopuna and displaying similar behaviours to kaimahi, and indicating we were not welcome in the units through their body language and asking us when we were going to be leaving.

Kaimahi and whānau who did engage with us all vocalised that Korowai Manaaki is not safe. Amongst some of those who chose to kōrero with us, there was fear and hesitancy about the repercussions for speaking out. This was also evident in body language with those we spoke with constantly looking at those who were around or at the CCTV cameras. Whānau of mokopuna in Korowai Manaaki at the time of this follow-up visit also shared that there is questionable practice occurring in the facility, but it would put their tamaiti at even further risk if they talked about what was going on. Some whānau said they are waiting until their tamaiti

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<sup>13</sup> Members of the youth council are elected by mokopuna in each of the open units. The aim of the council is to provide opportunity for mokopuna to share their thoughts and feedback regarding their time in residence directly to the residence leadership team. This can include positive feedback as well as suggestions for improvements.



leaves Korowai Manaaki before they raise their concerns and complaints as they feared for their mokopuna safety.

*"I have had a lot of sleepless nights, when I don't get a phone call, I wonder what has happened".  
(Whānau).*

*"The young people are not safe here – especially around their physical and mental safety, the care here is not consistent. There are some not so great staff here, they are unethical. It is not okay – it's really unsafe. They [staff] need to go".  
(Whānau).*

The concerns for safety in general centre around a bullying culture that exists amongst kaimahi, and which filters down to mokopuna in the residence. Some kaimahi are being threatened or bullied by other kaimahi if they speak out about bad practice, or when they implement boundaries with mokopuna and adhere to practice expectations when working with them.

*"Kaimahi know that they would be bullied, be made an outcast. There are also situations where some kaimahi will get the kids to greenlight<sup>14</sup> kaimahi to keep quiet and turn a blind eye".*

*(Kaimahi)*

Unprovoked assaults between mokopuna have continued to escalate in severity and frequency, particularly group assaults, where mokopuna are getting 'blind shot', through punches or kicks to the head area. We were advised that mokopuna are being held in secure care even though they do not meet the grounds as per s368 of the Oranga Tamariki Act 1989<sup>15</sup>. We were informed that the reason for this is because they have been assaulted in every other unit within the residence, and there is now nowhere else for them to go within the residence.

The environment of Korowai Manaaki is described by kaimahi as a closed environment where everything is swept under the carpet, *"it's hush hush in there – too hush hush, not enough awahi to help the boys"* (kaimahi). We were advised by some kaimahi that mokopuna are often hesitant to engage as they too were scared about what will happen *"boys look at Korowai Manaaki, as if it is a maximum-security prison, very prison like politics in there – say something you're a snitch (kaimahi)"*.

Mokopuna who are placed in Korowai Manaaki are placed there by the Youth and District Courts to be held accountable for their offending and engage in rehabilitative interventions. Mana Mokopuna is very concerned that in practice, based on the findings of this follow-up

<sup>14</sup> Planned assault usually by a group. In this context, this means that some kaimahi at Korowai Manaaki have facilitated opportunities for mokopuna in the residence to assault other kaimahi or to threaten them.

<sup>15</sup> [Oranga Tamariki Act 1989 No 24 \(as at 30 June 2024\), Public Act 368 Grounds for placement in secure care – New Zealand Legislation](#)



OPCAT monitoring visit, there are minimal therapeutic interventions in place to support mokopuna rehabilitation, and mokopuna are being subjected to inappropriate and unprofessional practice from kaimahi that is unsafe, harmful, and reinforcing anti-social behaviours.

*"It's a hostile environment in there, then the boys go back to the hostile environment in the community that they came from, and the cycle continues".*

*(Kaimahi)*

*"We were told we had to talk to the last organisation that came in, or else we would get marked down (on BMS<sup>16</sup>). That's what happened last time. They made it mandatory to talk to them."*

*(Mokopuna)*

## Some kaimahi practice continues to be unprofessional, inappropriate and unsafe

There are some excellent kaimahi employed at Korowai Manaaki with very strong practice and residential experience who are committed and attentive to the care and wellbeing of mokopuna. However, these kaimahi are often overlooked or labelled as problematic by other kaimahi.

*"I won't be silenced by people that try to bully me and that try to actually harm mokopuna in a place where they have already had a horrible life and we should be here to help them".*

*(Kaimahi).*

A lot of kaimahi practice at Korowai Manaaki continues to be inconsistent with a lack of professional boundaries, resulting in inappropriate and unsafe practice with mokopuna.

*"Kaimahi practice is inconsistent, mokopuna can run the place - straight up, practice has gotten worse since they [named kaimahi] started".*

*(Kaimahi).*

Across both the February and November 2024 visits the OPCAT monitoring team has observed and have been told of situations where the following kaimahi practice has occurred:

- Yelling and swearing at mokopuna
- 'Egging' mokopuna on around their sexualised behaviour or comments towards female kaimahi instead of addressing it
- Threatening and provoking mokopuna to get a response

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<sup>16</sup> Behaviour Management System – a system where kaimahi allocate points depending on how well mokopuna have behaved or managed themselves throughout the day. There are three levels to the system and differing incentives at each level. Incentives include later bedtimes and a choice of snack foods and hygiene products.



- Turning a blind eye and allowing incidents to occur such as assaults between mokopuna, mokopuna on kaimahi, and kaimahi on mokopuna.
- Confidential concerns or information about mokopuna being shared amongst kaimahi, and in some cases with mokopuna, across different units
- Some kaimahi in leadership positions are in the units but constantly on their phone texting and do not engage with kaimahi or mokopuna. This was observed by Mana Mokopuna to be occurring throughout the duration of the visit even when sitting in front of mokopuna.
- Allowing mokopuna to tag (graffiti) on the walls and windows of the units without intervention
- Sitting and watching mokopuna with minimal interaction or intervention
- Being disruptive during programmes, throwing food at mokopuna or sharing with them about their personal substance use
- Sleeping on shift
- Being at the residence, even when they are not rostered on shift
- Referring to mokopuna by their tag names
- Lack of line of sight
- Lack of de-escalation strategies and using secure care as a threat to manage behaviours
- Not turning up for rostered shifts and not contacting respective managers that they will be absent or arriving late for work.
- Buying compliance – giving mokopuna vapes and cannabis to ensure an easy or quiet shift

During this November 2024 follow-up visit, Mana Mokopuna witnessed an incident occur in secure care at the residence. Mokopuna were asking if they could mix with each other, rather than be subject to Regulation 48 restrictions<sup>17</sup>. Kaimahi had an open discussion about it in the common area of secure care and this discussion became heated. Kaimahi were arguing against one another and mokopuna were present and at different points became involved in the discussions. Mana Mokopuna then observed TLO back-up being called, and at one point there were five kaimahi arguing against one kaimahi. The discussion then moved to the staff hub, where kaimahi could be heard yelling and arguing with one another from the outside. Kaimahi standing outside of the hub stated, *"that's what they get for undermining us"*, referring to the kaimahi questioning mokopuna rights and whether the requirement for regulation 48 restrictions was necessary. There was no obvious conclusion to the discussion and mokopuna continue to be separated.

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<sup>17</sup> Regulation 48 of the Residential Care Regulations 1996 which allows mokopuna to be held in their bedrooms and only leave to have time in a common area without mixing with other mokopuna. When secure care is full, mokopuna have seven minutes out of their bedrooms every hour.





*"It's the reason why we have the green lights and all that bulls\*\*\* happening. When you know that s\*\*\* is happening they [mokopuna] all have their favourite staff. One kaimahi might be setting the boundaries based around good practice and they [other kaimahi] will make that kaimahi not a favourite amongst mokopuna. It's all super suspect".*  
(Kaimahi).

## Secure Care

Secure care is being used frequently at Korowai Manaaki. Mana Mokopuna found that there is often little evidence that grounds have been met that justify mokopuna needing to be admitted into the secure care unit.

There had been no retention paperwork filed in the Youth Court<sup>18</sup> for some mokopuna who had been held in secure care in the residence, and during the November OPCAT monitoring visit, one mokopuna had been held in secure care for over a week subject to regulation 48<sup>19</sup>. Regulation 48's were automatically applied for mokopuna coming into secure care, and kaimahi – including TLO's – could not properly explain why the regulation was being used or the length of time that mokopuna were being rotated out of their bedrooms, especially when there were several mokopuna admitted into the secure care unit.

Mokopuna in Korowai Manaaki who have high and complex needs were being admitted into secure care as 'voluntary admissions'. These mokopuna were often too scared to leave secure care for the open units due to fears for their safety, or kaimahi were unable to manage their behaviours or needs on the open units. Kaimahi often referred to these mokopuna as the "A's, B's, C's and D's", in reference to their diagnoses of ADHD, FASD, and ODD. It was apparent that allowing mokopuna to voluntarily be in secure care had become an accepted way of managing the risk in Korowai Manaaki. This was evident to Mana Mokopuna during the monitoring visit as there was a tamaiti who had continued to be assaulted in every unit that they had been in, and kaimahi said they could not keep this tamaiti safe. As a result, the tamaiti was in secure care until a plan could be arranged to either transfer them to another youth justice residence or transition them into one of the open units at Korowai Manaaki with a risk mitigation plan. The tamaiti was heard regularly asking kaimahi when they could leave secure care and kaimahi were unable to provide a clear timeframe or explanation to the tamaiti.

The Mana Mokopuna OPCAT monitoring team was also told by residence kaimahi that secure care is often being used as a punishment for mokopuna, and the use of secure care is overall inconsistent. For example, some mokopuna who have been caught smoking cannabis or under the influence of it are admitted to secure care, and on other occasions mokopuna face no

<sup>18</sup> In order to keep mokopuna in secure care for longer than 72 hours, an application must be made to the Youth Court as per s371 of the Oranga Tamariki Act 1989, for the approval of the continued detention in secure care.

<sup>19</sup> [Oranga Tamariki \(Residential Care\) Regulations 1996 \(SR 1996/354\) \(as at 01 July 2023\) 48 Confinement to rooms of children and young persons in secure care – New Zealand Legislation](#)





consequences at all. The lack of consistently applied policies, guidelines, and operational practice is causing confusion for mokopuna, and undermines kaimahi who are trying to provide positive, pro-social boundaries and learning for mokopuna in the residence.

## Use of Force

Mana Mokopuna was told by kaimahi that from May to July 2024 there was no CCTV footage available from within Korowai Manaaki, because contractors had come into the facility to fix another property related issue, which had impacted the servers and immediate access to CCTV footage. The issue had been raised to Oranga Tamariki National Office. During this time, the Korowai Manaaki leadership team were reliant on accurate reporting of all instances where force was used in the units where mokopuna lived, to determine if footage was needed to be requested from the external provider.

Mana Mokopuna reviewed use of force documentation and noted during the time period between May and July 2024, that some of the sections in the required documentation were left blank and included whether the force used was consistent with STAR<sup>20</sup> training techniques. Some of these reviews were also not signed off by the appropriate Team Leader. When we raised this issue with the residence leadership team, we were told it was an oversight on the Team Leader's part and it was on the 'to do' list for senior Korowai Manaaki kaimahi to follow up on. There is no guarantee all use of force incidents during this time have been properly documented and/ or reviewed.

Mana Mokopuna has serious concerns for the care of mokopuna when CCTV footage is not readily available over a significant period of time. This is amplified with a lack of a thorough process not put in place and implemented to ensure the care and safety of mokopuna in the facility. This is especially concerning given the prevalence of serious assaults between mokopuna, the aforementioned 'greenlights' on kaimahi, and the lack of use of force documentation that is mandatory, in line with Oranga Tamariki Residential Care Regulations 1996<sup>21</sup>, every time force of any kind is used.<sup>22</sup>

## Facility Leadership and Communication

Since the full OPCAT monitoring visit in February 2024, a permanent residence manager has been appointed. At the time of the November 2024 visit, this residence manager had been working at Korowai Manaaki for six months. Prior to this appointment, there had been four residence managers over the course of two years, which had been causing inconsistency and instability across the facility. The residence manager told us that their top priorities for Korowai

<sup>20</sup> Safe Tactical Approach and Response (STAR) is the Oranga Tamariki youth justice residences' model for physical restraint. It is a bespoke programme developed specifically for this environment.

<sup>21</sup> [Oranga Tamariki \(Residential Care\) Regulations 1996 \(SR 1996/354\) \(as at 01 July 2023\) 22 Use of force in dealing with child or young person – New Zealand Legislation](#)

<sup>22</sup> [Working with tamariki and rangatahi in residences | Practice Centre | Oranga Tamariki](#)



Manaaki are safety, security, kaimahi practice, and programmes that set mokopuna up for success.

However, some kaimahi said there were still on-going concerns around the lack of clear and consistent communication and role modelling of good practice from the residence leadership team and team leader operations (TLO) roles, which is filtering down to kaimahi working in the units.

*"There is a lot of mistreatment going on in there (Korowai). It filters from the top, so if that is what kaimahi on the floor are being taught then that's how they are going to practice".*

*(Kaimahi).*

Concerns from kaimahi include:

- Some requests to meet with management often result in 'no shows' or are not prioritised
- When concerns are escalated to the residence leadership team there is often no response back and kaimahi and stakeholders say they are constantly having to follow up for information.
- There are inconsistent expectations and communication from TLO's, impacting negatively on kaimahi working directly with mokopuna.
- Various kaimahi are in acting roles, and kaimahi are sometimes unclear who to escalate issues to and what the escalation process is.
- External stakeholders are not always being advised when mokopuna have been discharged from the facility and are not involved in discharge planning. This results in stakeholders having to follow up once mokopuna are in the community to ensure mokopuna have their follow up appointments arranged. This is impacting on mokopuna basic rights, to things such as health and education.
- There is a lack of communication, feedback, and correspondence around incidents across the site amongst kaimahi and external stakeholders. For example, not informing stakeholders if mokopuna have been using substances in the facility, and stakeholders are having to rely on mokopuna to tell them, which impacts on mokopuna and kaimahi safety and mokopuna treatment plans.



## Mokopuna basic physiological needs are not always being met

Mokopuna did not have access to the following resources to meet their basic psychological<sup>23</sup> needs during the November 2024 visit:

- Mokopuna and kaimahi complained that the showers in some units had been cold for three days and that this had been raised with the property team on three occasions, however showers remained cold.
- There was a shortage of clean towels and linen across the facility, and kaimahi reported that new towels and linen continues to go missing. Mana Mokopuna saw the towels being given to mokopuna before the shower process, and they had holes in them and looked like rags.
- Some mokopuna did not have access to pillows or blankets in their rooms and some were being left waiting for blankets for several hours in secure care.
- There was a general lack of basic unit resources across the facility because these were not regularly topped up, such as jams for breakfasts for mokopuna, and dishwashing liquid in the kitchens. Kaimahi mentioned that after a recent incident at the residence which required several mokopuna to change units, several items went missing once these mokopuna returned to their original unit. These included laundry baskets, a mattress, and jams.

*"We had to beg management for more jam".*

*(Kaimahi).*

- Mokopuna and kaimahi describe the food as 'yuck' and mokopuna are often eating two-minute noodles instead of the food provided.
- Some kaimahi shared that there are also times when there is not enough food for mokopuna, so they keep extra noodles or bread in their personal lockers, so they can supplement what is given to mokopuna to ensure there is enough kai and they do not go hungry.

*"Can we get food like Te Maioha or Te Au rere (other Youth Justice residences). It's way better than this. I've already been punished, feels like I'm getting repunished".*

*(Mokopuna).*

Mokopuna have the right to adequate nutritious food<sup>24</sup> and an adequate standard of living that meets their physical, mental, and emotional needs<sup>25</sup>. Oranga Tamariki urgently needs to ensure consistent and reliable mokopuna access to hot showers and nutritious food, ensuring units are regularly restocked with clean linen and resources to ensure mokopuna who are admitted into Korowai Manaaki are living

<sup>23</sup> [Maslow's Hierarchy of Needs](#)

<sup>24</sup> [Convention on the Rights of the Child | OHCHR](#)

<sup>25</sup> [Convention on the Rights of the Child | OHCHR](#)



in a clean environment and can have their basic physiological needs met, as well as their basic human dignity upheld.

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## Contraband continues to be freely available in the residence

Mokopuna access to cannabis and vapes has continued since the last monitoring visit within all units of the residence. Incident reports<sup>26</sup> evidenced the high use of contraband in the facility and noted on some occasions multiple mokopuna partaking in the use of cannabis in units. Members of the residence leadership team at the outset of the visit acknowledged there was still a significant amount of contraband present on site and that the amount present does not match the number of whānau visits.

*"Contraband is out the freaking gate".*

*"The use of cannabis is shocking".*

*(Kaimahi)*

Many kaimahi said that there continues to be occasions where contraband is found during whānau visits but that they are also aware some kaimahi are supplying mokopuna with vapes<sup>27</sup> and cannabis<sup>28</sup>. The residence leadership team has been continuing to communicate to kaimahi the importance of speaking up and calling it out if they become aware of kaimahi supplying mokopuna with contraband of any type. The on-going challenge for the residence leadership team to hold these kaimahi accountable through appropriate processes, is having the evidence.

*"Mokopuna are not climbing roofs for vapes and marijuana as it is in the residence continuously. It's not coming from visits as there is so much in here with little whānau visits to equal the amounts. So where is it coming from?"*

*(Kaimahi).*

Similarly to the findings of the full OPCAT monitoring visit in February 2024, concerns continue to be raised as at November 2024 about:

- The impact of mokopuna using illegal substances and the countereffects it has for mokopuna when they are on prescribed medication.
- Some kaimahi bartering with mokopuna for their medication and paying them with vapes or contraband as a 'buy and comply' method to ensure mokopuna cause no issues during shifts for kaimahi.
- A certain cohort of mokopuna are using substances daily. These mokopuna have little or no whānau visits, meaning whānau cannot always be bringing in contraband for this cohort of mokopuna. Contraband is entering the facility through different avenues or

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<sup>26</sup> Data received from Oranga Tamariki during the visit.

<sup>27</sup> It is illegal to supply vapes both directly and indirectly to mokopuna under the age of 18 (Smokefree Environments and Regulated Products (Vaping) Amendment Act 2020)

<sup>28</sup> S6(d) Misuse of Drugs Act 1975



mokopuna who are receiving contraband during whānau visits are sharing it amongst the unit.

- Mokopuna being supplied and having access to an illegal substance whilst in a secure youth justice residence, where they are meant to be addressing their offending behaviours and engaging in therapeutic interventions.

*"This is prison it's easy to get these things."*

*(Mokopuna)*

*"The boys are being groomed for prison. There is no light, no direction, boys only see themselves as nothing but a prisoner or a gangster – there needs to be more hope in there".*

*(Kaimahi).*

## Mokopuna remain bored

Since February 2024, there has continued to be a lack of meaningful programmes implemented for mokopuna to engage in at Korowai Manaaki, particularly after school and in the weekends within the units. Mokopuna are complaining that they are bored. The programme co-ordinator has been doing extensive work to support kaimahi working in the units to develop programmes for six-week blocks, during their assigned 'admin' or 'office days'<sup>29</sup>. However, there is minimal follow through from shift teams, with few kaimahi carrying out the planned programmes for and with mokopuna.

This is resulting in mokopuna spending most of their time in the unit watching movies or series such as Prison Break, playing on PlayStations, and watching inappropriate content on YouTube. This was evident to Mana Mokopuna across the three days of the November follow-up 2024 visit. While monitoring in the units, the Mana Mokopuna OPCAT monitoring team observed mokopuna in the TV rooms watching movies and YouTube. It was also noted when reviewing the daily logbooks that minimal activity was recorded and across the units 'passive recreation' was noted most frequently, with little physical activity or access to the outdoors, particularly during the weekends.

## There is potential for good programming at Korowai Manaaki

It was positive to see that the programme co-ordinator had put together a comprehensive school holiday programme for the upcoming Christmas holidays, and that Kingslea School<sup>30</sup> continues to provide an engaging educational programme in Korowai Manaaki, supporting mokopuna to achieve their NCEA credits and develop their life skills for when they transition into the community. This is helpful to uphold the right of mokopuna to education. We observed a tamaiti working in the café that runs every Wednesday, where mokopuna make lunches and

<sup>29</sup> These are designated days for each residence to carryout training and planning during non-contact time with mokopuna.

<sup>30</sup> [Kingslea School – Learning for Life](#)



coffee for kaimahi, in order to practice their barista and food preparation skills. This tamaiti enjoyed sharing with us what they had learnt during their time working in the café.

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Mokopuna have a right to engage and participate in age-appropriate recreational activities under article 31<sup>31</sup> of the Children's Convention. Mokopuna at Korowai Manaaki are bored without enough meaningful activities and limited access to physical activity and access to the outdoors.

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## Some mokopuna continue to have minimal contact with Oranga Tamariki social workers

Oranga Tamariki social workers level of contact, visits, and engagement with mokopuna in Korowai Manaaki has worsened since the visit in February 2024. The Mana Mokopuna OPCAT monitoring team was told there had been multiple instances where some mokopuna have made several attempts to phone their social workers but had no response.

Other issues with social work practice with some mokopuna in Korowai Manaaki include:

- Mokopuna not being given copies of their plans or information related to them when they request this from Oranga Tamariki site social workers and Youth Advocates.
- When court matters are transferred to the District Court, mokopuna allocated Oranga Tamariki social workers have simply just dropped off with no communication and were difficult to contact.
- Some Family Group Conferences (FGC's) are not occurring in person, and instead these are often being convened via Microsoft Teams with cameras off.
- Oranga Tamariki social workers are not spending time to build rapport with mokopuna to learn about them and their specific needs to inform decision-making and advocate for them.
- Many mokopuna are not being visited by their Oranga Tamariki social workers, leaving mokopuna with no understanding of their plans, significant uncertainty, and a lack of a statutory social worker checking on their wellbeing and safety, as per their practice responsibilities<sup>32</sup> and Oranga Tamariki practice standards.
- Whānau are experiencing difficulties in trying to get in contact with social workers, receive updates, and be informed of plans for their mokopuna.
- Kaimahi said once mokopuna are remanded to Korowai Manaaki, social workers often 'dump and run'.

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<sup>31</sup> [Convention on the Rights of the Child | OHCHR](#)

<sup>32</sup> [Allocating a key worker and co-worker | Practice Centre | Oranga Tamariki](#)



*"We have been involved with Oranga Tamariki since he was a child, we asked for help multiple times, but it wasn't until he started offending that we got support."*

*(Whānau).*

*"He was bailed home, on a 24-7 curfew to me, couldn't leave my side, no support, no plans in place, he had nothing to do, and it was hard for us to all manage. He then reoffended".*

*(Whānau)*

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As part of Oranga Tamariki practice standards, social workers are required to see mokopuna regularly face-to-face ideally alone, in order to build trust, understand their needs, and ensure they have a say in decisions that impact them.<sup>33</sup> It is essential social workers develop plans for mokopuna within seven days of admission and continue to update their plans every four weeks by engaging with mokopuna, their whānau and key stakeholders<sup>34</sup>.

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## Independent advocates

Since the February 2024 visit there has been an increase in accessibility for independent advocates to engage with mokopuna and a commitment from residence management to build relationships with independent advocates. Mana Mokopuna were told that advocates can access the units without issues and have developed good communications with residence management to work together for mokopuna who are in the facility.

Mana Mokopuna are pleased with this progress given the difficulties independent advocates have had accessing Korowai Manaaki unit as outlined in previous OPCAT reports. It is integral to the safety of mokopuna having kaimahi independent from the facility to support and advocate for them. Mana Mokopuna hopes to see continued strengthening of this relationship to ensure mokopuna have a confidential avenue through which they can describe their care experiences and what could make it better.

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<sup>33</sup> [See and engage tamariki | Practice Centre | Oranga Tamariki](#)

<sup>34</sup> [Working with tamariki and rangatahi in residences | Practice Centre | Oranga Tamariki](#)



# Update from the January 2025 one day monitoring visit

## Scope of the monitoring visit

Mana Mokopuna has continued to keep a watching brief of Korowai Manaaki since the OPCAT monitoring visit in November 2024. Given the little progress made between February and November 2024, and the fact that another incident occurred on 30 December 2024 where mokopuna gained access to the roof of the facility, a 'drop in' follow-up unannounced visit was conducted by the OPCAT Monitoring team on 29 January 2025.

The purpose of this visit was to continue to assess progress on recommendations made to prevent harm to mokopuna in the facility, as a result of previous OPCAT visits to Korowai Manaaki. There were 31 mokopuna onsite at the time of the visit in January 2025 and progress was assessed across seven areas:

- Leadership and culture
- Kaimahi practice
- Contraband
- Secure Care
- Use of Force
- Programmes
- Mokopuna Māori

During the visit we spoke with mokopuna and kaimahi to hear their experiences about what has changed since our OPCAT monitoring visit in November 2024. We reviewed key documentation from the facility to assist with our assessment of progress.

## Detailed findings – January 2025

### Leadership and Culture

There has been acknowledgement and recognition from members of the Oranga Tamariki senior leadership team and the Korowai Manaaki residence leadership team that significant work is required to change a culture that has been embedded for several years at Korowai Manaaki.

This requires courageous conversations, stable leadership, accountability, and a commitment to change. Senior leaders at both the National Office and facility level shared that they are confident that the plan they have developed is going to help make Korowai Manaaki a safer place for mokopuna. They communicated to our team that they are committed to addressing the ongoing concerns regarding Korowai Manaaki and the care that mokopuna experience at the facility, acknowledging the time this has taken to-date is not good enough.





Members of both the Oranga Tamariki National Office and Korowai Manaaki residence leadership teams have outlined their expectations to kaimahi at the facility and are clear that if these are not adhered to, kaimahi will be held accountable. They have made clear to Korowai Manaaki kaimahi that inappropriate, unprofessional practice will not be tolerated.

This was evident as we had been told since the OPCAT visit in November 2024 that several kaimahi have been stood down or placed on performance management plans to address practice concerns. There has also been the introduction of a new process when kaimahi are phoning in sick or going to be late to work, to ensure accountability and reduce absenteeism. All kaimahi are now required to speak with the Manager Residence Operations directly if they cannot make their allocated shift. This has been reported by the residence leadership team as making a difference and deterring kaimahi away from simply not turning up to work without a valid excuse.

In addition, the residence leadership team is moving its offices into the education block of the facility, which looks out into the main egress area (known as the outside grassed 'compound') located in the middle of the facility. This will enable senior residence kaimahi to observe what is happening with mokopuna and address practice immediately. The residence manager also reports having more support, through a member of the senior leadership team at Oranga Tamariki being on site every fortnight for three days whilst the reset occurs.

Mana Mokopuna was pleased to hear that kaimahi practice is being prioritised and that all kaimahi will be retrained to support increased capability when engaging with mokopuna. Depending on the quality of this training, this should help to ensure best practice from residence kaimahi in their work with within the facility, and therefore a higher quality care experience for mokopuna.

Kaimahi told us that the residence is going back to basics in terms of training. They were aware of new processes being implemented to focus on addressing practice. The OPCAT Monitoring team noted a shift in optimism from some kaimahi at the facility (compared to when we visited in November 2024) about the trajectory for where Korowai Manaaki is heading. However, some kaimahi and mokopuna were still sceptical around whether the changes would be sustainable and that some concerns would remain unaddressed as they were used to nothing changing.

*"Kaimahi are still the same, but ain't much that can be done about it".  
(Mokopuna)*

## Kaimahi Practice

Kaimahi practice is a key priority area that the residence leadership team is focusing on, particularly retraining kaimahi and building their capability in terms of caring for mokopuna.



During the visit the OPCAT Monitoring team observed kaimahi engaging more with mokopuna. An example of this was with one of the units utilising in the compound area for mokopuna to ride scooters, and kaimahi playing basketball with mokopuna. Mokopuna were seen smiling and laughing with kaimahi who were actively participating in the activities with mokopuna.

Mokopuna said they enjoyed riding the scooters and kaimahi shared that a new process had recently been implemented where each unit had a dedicated time on the outside compound, so that mokopuna could use the area for play. Kaimahi said the boys are enjoying being on the compound, as it makes them feel more free in the open space, rather than in the concrete courtyards attached to their units.

Kaimahi who spoke with us had varying views around whether practice had improved or not, with some who felt nothing had changed, whereas others felt hopeful that practice was going to improve for the betterment of mokopuna. Some mokopuna we spoke with also shared this kaimahi view in that some kaimahi practice had gotten better, however, other mokopuna told us that nothing much had changed since our last visit.

## Contraband

Contraband remains prevalent within the facility and there continues to be incidents of mokopuna smoking cannabis in the units. Incident reports note mokopuna are smoking cannabis in their bedrooms, in the bathrooms, and on some occasions, whole units are partaking in smoking cannabis.

Documentation received from Oranga Tamariki related to the number of contraband incidents across January and February 2025 was blank and stated that the monthly data for February 2025 shows no incidents. This is despite contraband occurrences being noted across incident reports within the facility across this time.

There continues to be cases of contraband being brought in during whānau visits, however kaimahi continue to raise concerns around whether kaimahi are supplying mokopuna with contraband, as there continues to be issues with a cohort of mokopuna being found with contraband or under the influence, who do not have any whānau visits. Kaimahi who spoke with us advised that there has been no improvement with contraband since our last visit in November 2024, saying that mokopuna still readily have access to vapes and cannabis, which continues to be a significant problem.

## Secure Care

Secure Care is used frequently and concerns remain regarding it being used as a punishment for mokopuna. Kaimahi application of the reasons for admitting mokopuna into secure care continue to be inconsistently applied. During the visit the secure care logbooks and register



were reviewed, with the Monitoring team noting documentation was incomplete or inaccurate, and Post-It notes were placed throughout the books by senior residence kaimahi reminding unit-based kaimahi to input the missing information, such as the grounds for secure care admissions, times of admissions and mokopuna movements when in the secure care unit.

Some mokopuna continue to refuse to leave secure care for significant periods of time, as they are too scared to go back to the open units because of assaults from other mokopuna and bullying. This was evident during the visit as there was a tamaiti who had been admitted into secure care on 4 January 2025, and they were still placed in secure care on the date we visited (29 January 2025), despite no longer meeting grounds for being in secure care, nor having a retention order granted by a Youth Court judge.

We were also told about another tamaiti in a similar situation who remained in secure care for approximately two months until a transfer to another residence could occur, as they were too scared to be in the Korowai Manaaki open units due to safety concerns they had for themselves when around other mokopuna.

Voluntary or prolonged stays in secure care at the request of mokopuna highlights the ongoing need for a review of secure care practices at this facility, to ensure the units are being used appropriately and that appropriate mechanisms are put in place to ensure mokopuna are safe and feel supported to return to open units.

## Use of Force

The OPCAT Monitoring team followed up with members of the Oranga Tamariki senior leadership team at national office regarding the CCTV footage and use of force reviews. We were assured that the issues experienced with the CCTV between May and July 2024 had been escalated to Oranga Tamariki National Office level, and despite the technical difficulties, this did not prevent CCTV footage being recorded and cameras did remain online.

Mana Mokopuna was told there was an interim plan in place with the external provider of the Korowai Manaaki CCTV footage, in that if footage was required, this could be requested and accessed directly through the security company and provided on a USB drive.

During this time, Oranga Tamariki senior leaders emphasised that they assumed that use of force incidents were reviewed in line with expectation. However, this could not be verified by the OPCAT Monitoring team as the use of force incident documentation was blank in some areas during May to June 2024.

Mana Mokopuna was told on 4 February 2025 that every use of force incident is being reviewed by either the Manager Residential Services Youth Justice or the Residence Manager. A Use of



Force panel is in the process of being established to support an independent review of use of force incidents.

## Programmes

Mokopuna were engaging in their first week back at school after the summer holidays during the January 2025 visit. The education and health teams are working together to trial splitting the units in half so one group of mokopuna are engaging in their education block, whilst the other half of the unit are meeting with the medical team. The intent is to support mokopuna to focus more during education with less mokopuna in the classroom and to also have mokopuna health needs met in a timely manner with dedicated time to meet health professionals.

Kaimahi reported that the trial is going well so far, and reinforced to them the importance of always being open to trying something new and adapt to the changing needs of mokopuna who are admitted into the residence.

The programme co-ordinator continues to develop comprehensive programmes for mokopuna and provides comprehensive support for kaimahi to implement these programmes in the units, including cutting out pictures with written up instructions for kaimahi on how to play various game, for example, Pictionary.

The programme co-ordinator had developed an intensive holiday programme where mokopuna were able to mix with mokopuna from different units and a highlight for mokopuna was the VR programme facilitated by 3BagsFull<sup>35</sup>. Swimming pools had also been purchased for each unit for mokopuna to be able to use in their unit courtyard. The ongoing challenge for programming to be successful continues to be kaimahi following-through and implementing the programmes designed by the co-ordinator with mokopuna in the units. We were told that there are certain teams that are consistent and provide structure and routine for mokopuna and programmes are running well in the units. However, we were told by kaimahi that the majority of kaimahi working in the units continue to use the TV to entertain mokopuna. This is in line with the OPCAT Monitoring team review of unit logbooks during the November 2024 visit as well as through our observations both in November 2024 and in January 2025.

The barriers that are impacting on programmes being facilitated for mokopuna are:

- Kaimahi will complete their six weeks planning of programmes, however what they have presented and written up is not reflective of what is occurring in the units.
- Some kaimahi are not completing the programme planning accurately, often only planning for three weeks, with blocks that are blank with no planned activities.
- Capability – kaimahi do not know how to run programmes and when training is provided, they do not follow through with facilitating the activity as intended.

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<sup>35</sup> [Home New - 3BF - MAIN](#)



- Kaimahi cannot be bothered running programmes and want an easy shift so will let mokopuna watch movies.
- Compulsory programmes around care and regulations are not being run
- There is no currently employed PE teacher which is limiting the facilitated activity available to mokopuna throughout their structured day.
- Concerns regarding programmes are escalated via email to Korowai Manaaki senior leaders, however often there are no responses to these concerns raised.
- Additional FTE for an additional programme co-ordinator and employment co-ordinator, is required. It was noted by kaimahi that when the programme co-ordinator takes leave, kaimahi will wait until they return to get programmes signed off and there is nobody available to support or train kaimahi in how to run any planned programmes.

When reviewing documentation, programmes that were occurring frequently were Esports<sup>36</sup>, passive rec and film studies. Mokopuna also shared that there have not been many programmes, and instead, there is a lot of the time watching movies and they are bored.

*"This is Korowai Manaaki and I'm f\*\*\*\*\* bored".*  
(Mokopuna)

*"The programmes are s\*\*\*\*".*  
(Mokopuna)

## Mokopuna Māori

The Kaiwhakaue from another local youth justice residence is coming into Korowai Manaaki every Friday for 45-minute blocks<sup>37</sup> per unit to teach mokopuna kapa haka. The idea is that mokopuna can use these skills for any kaupapa. The pilot was in the first week during the January monitoring visit, and the early feedback was that mokopuna and kaimahi were really engaged and enjoying it.

*"Finally, we get some Māori stuff in here".*  
(Mokopuna)

The Mana Mokopuna OPCAT Monitoring Team was pleased to hear that this initiative is being piloted, given 23 out of 31 mokopuna in the facility at the time of the January 2025 visit whakapapa Māori.

Mana Mokopuna recommends a national strategy is implemented, which commits to investing into kaupapa Māori or Māori focused programmes to connect mokopuna to their culture and provide opportunity for them to grow their matakauranga Māori. Employing a full time kaiwhakaue

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<sup>36</sup> PlayStation games

<sup>37</sup> This is an 8 week pilot trail.



at Korowai Manaaki to support mokopuna Māori is something that should be explored at the conclusion of the current pilot.

*"Reconnection is the biggest healer for our kids who whakapapa Māori and for those that don't, gives them understanding of the communities that they are a part of. A lot of life lessons are weaved into kaupapa Māori".*  
(Kaiwhakaue)



## Update from the stakeholder hui held in January 2025

Mana Mokopuna independently facilitated a hui between members of the Senior Oranga Tamariki leadership team at National Office, kaimahi working in the residence, and external stakeholders<sup>38</sup>, to provide a forum for these key people working in Korowai Manaaki to raise their concerns directly to members of the Oranga Tamariki senior leadership team as well as the Korowai Manaaki residence leadership team. The aim was to understand each other's roles in the care of mokopuna at Korowai Manaaki and develop a plan to work collectively and move forward to improve mokopuna care experiences at the facility. This hui took place on 30 January 2025.

During this hui, all parties involved were able to share their concerns, the outcomes they wanted to achieve, and provide solutions that were focused on a collective agreement and commitment to working together. The focus of working together and the commitments made out of this hui centred on ensuring ensure mokopuna needs will be met, including making Korowai Manaaki safer for mokopuna.

There was a collective agreement from those present at the hui to regroup within three months to review actions that were discussed and committed to at this hui, with the aim of taking stock on progress and continuing to actively address any continuing concerns regarding the safety and care of mokopuna in the residence.

### Summary

Members of the Oranga Tamariki senior leadership team at national office have also developed and begun the implementation of a six-month accelerated action plan to provide supports aimed at rebuilding Korowai Manaaki. This includes, but is not limited to, temporarily reducing the number of mokopuna admissions into the facility in order to retrain all kaimahi and develop their capacity, capability, and strengthen practice when working with mokopuna.

The accelerated plan also includes a review of the recruitment approach for residential youth workers into the facility, a refresh of the Te Waharoa induction programme used in all Oranga Tamariki run residences with an emphasis on using real-life type scenarios and role play and working with kaimahi to improve programming and day schedules for mokopuna. There is also

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<sup>38</sup> External organisations are those who are not employed by Oranga Tamariki but provide services to mokopuna living in the facility. These can be, but are not limited to, health, education, philanthropic NGOs, clinical specialists and iwi partners.



an identified need for targeted modules to increase the clinical oversight for mokopuna with high and complex needs.<sup>39</sup>

Mana Mokopuna acknowledges that there has been some progress made at Korowai Manaaki since the last OPCAT monitoring visit in November 2024. Mana Mokopuna notes that the steps being taken as part of the accelerated action plan to improve practice and culture are steps in the right direction, to better uphold and protect the rights and needs of mokopuna in this facility. We acknowledge the open communication and regular updates from Oranga Tamariki on the steps being taken to address issues at this facility that impact on the care of mokopuna, and the willingness to attend the stakeholder hui to address the concerns being raised.

However, Mana Mokopuna continues to be concerned about the safety for mokopuna and kaimahi at Korowai Manaaki, and the length of time it is taking to address those concerns.

Mana Mokopuna will continue to closely monitor the facility under our OPCAT National Preventative Mechanism to ensure actions are occurring in a timely and effective manner to address the concerns that have continued to be raised in 2023 and 2024 OPCAT monitoring reports. We will be actively tracking the progress of the facility under the accelerated plan that Oranga Tamariki has in place and we will measure this against care experiences of mokopuna. We continue to hold Oranga Tamariki accountable for preventing harm to mokopuna in this facility and ensuring a safe, rehabilitative and therapeutic environment that upholds holistic mokopuna rights, including the rights of mokopuna Māori.

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<sup>39</sup> Documentation received from Oranga Tamariki related to 6-month action plan for Korowai Manaaki.





# Appendix One:

## 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 and kaimahi.	
Interviews and informal discussions with kaimahi and external stakeholders	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>■ Mokopuna</li> <li>■ Whānau</li> <li>■ Residence Manager</li> <li>■ Manager Residence Operations</li> <li>■ Residential Youth Workers</li> <li>■ Team Leader Logistics</li> <li>■ Case Leaders</li> <li>■ Team Leader Clinical Practice</li> <li>■ Residential Quality Lead</li> <li>■ Team Leader Operations</li> <li>■ Shift Leaders</li> <li>■ Programme Co-Ordinator</li> <li>■ VOYCE – Whakarongo Mai</li> <li>■ Senior Leadership Hui</li> <li>■ Odyssey House</li> <li>■ Tū Māia Youth Forensics Team (TTTO)</li> <li>■ Nurses</li> <li>■ Senior Medical Officer</li> <li>■ Kingslea School teachers</li> </ul>
Documentation	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>■ All About Me Plans</li> <li>■ Grievance quarterly reports</li> <li>■ Behaviour Management System</li> <li>■ Oranga Tamariki Residence Action Plan</li> <li>■ Serious Event Notifications</li> <li>■ Incident reports</li> <li>■ MySafety Incidents</li> <li>■ Practice and Residence Regulations Summary – May 2024</li> <li>■ Site Programme Planner</li> <li>■ Team three weekly programme plans</li> <li>■ Kaimahi roster</li> <li>■ Report of Concerns</li> </ul>



	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>■ Secure care data</li> <li>■ Secure care integration plans</li> <li>■ Daily logbooks</li> <li>■ Secure care register</li> <li>■ Seized/Prohibited items register.</li> <li>■ Monthly Quality Reports</li> <li>■ Mokopuna list</li> <li>■ Use of Force data and reviews</li> <li>■ Professional and whānau visits</li> </ul>
Observations	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>■ Unit routines and mokopuna engagement with kaimahi and each other.</li> <li>■ Education in the classroom</li> <li>■ Activities on-site</li> <li>■ Shift handovers.</li> <li>■ Morning, afternoon, and evening shifts</li> </ul>