



25 September 2025

Dr Claire Achmad  
Children's Commissioner  
Mana Mokopuna | Children and Young People's Commission  
Sent via email: [REDACTED]

Tēnā koe Dr Achmad

### **OPCAT Monitoring Report – Whakatakapokai Youth Justice residence**

From 20–22 May 2025, your monitoring team carried out an unannounced monitoring visit to Whakatakapokai Youth Justice Residence (Whakatakapokai) on behalf of the Children's Commissioner. The purpose of the visit was to assess the facility's performance against the seven domains relevant to the Children's Commissioner's role as a National Preventive Mechanism (NPM) under the Optional Protocol to the Convention against Torture (OPCAT).

On 22 August 2025, you provided your draft OPCAT report for Whakatakapokai to Oranga Tamariki—Ministry for Children (Oranga Tamariki) for review and comment. Our response to the factual accuracy of the draft report was shared with your office on 23 September 2025.

Please refer to the attached table for our response to your recommendations following the monitoring team's visit. Oranga Tamariki has accepted 12 of the 14 recommendations. Recommendations we have accepted include ensuring consistent, culturally grounded, and safe practice across residences by improving mokopuna planning and documentation, enhancing kaimahi training and supervision, integrating training into rosters, clarifying frameworks and procedures (including secure care and incident reporting), and expanding access to cultural programmes and off-site activities.

We note that during this visit, Mana Mokopuna found no evidence of cruel, inhuman, degrading treatment or punishment (ill-treatment).

Your monitoring team noted areas of strength at Whakatakapokai, including efforts to revitalise the residence operating model with a Māori-centred approach, strengthening relationships with mana whenua, and increasing cultural programming for mokopuna Māori. Kaimahi have observed positive changes in the residence culture and are hopeful for the future. Education continues to be a highlight, with mokopuna engaged in holistic learning and earning NCEA credits, and the residence is clean, tidy, and undergoing significant refurbishment.

We acknowledge that there are areas where focus is required, including supporting kaimahi through the transition to new management, enhancing communication, and clarifying secure care processes. We also see opportunities to improve documentation of transition and care plans and strengthen incident review processes. Kaimahi have identified the value of compulsory training, regular supervision, and reinstating offsite activities for mokopuna.

I trust you find this information useful and thank you for the important role you have in ensuring our rangatahi in residences are safe and well cared for.

Nāku noa, nā

A handwritten signature in black ink, consisting of several overlapping loops and a trailing line, positioned below the Māori phrase.

Julie Miller  
**General Manager External Monitoring & Reviews**  
**System Leadership**