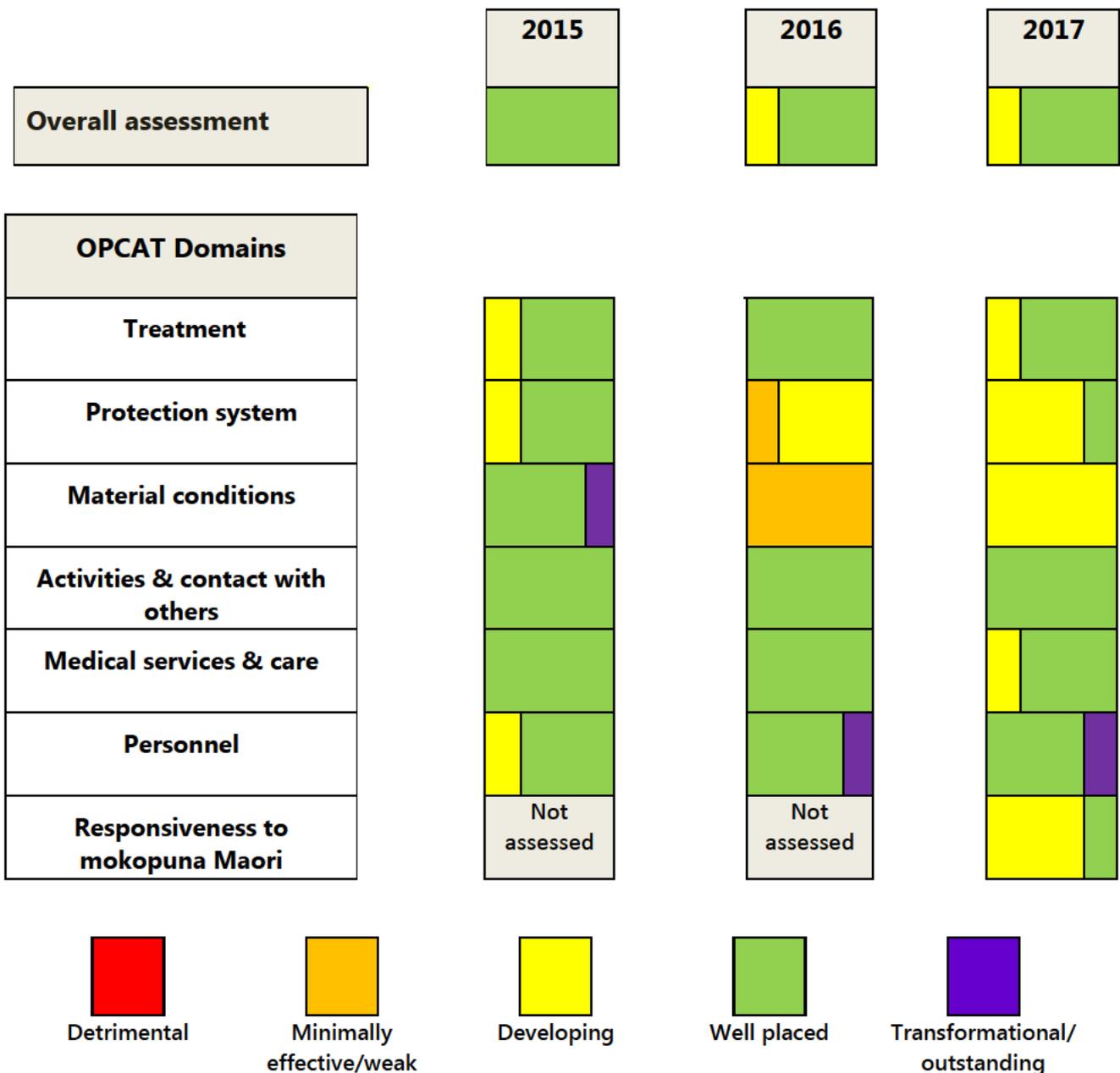


# Oranga Tamariki Residence Visit (Unannounced OPCAT Visit)

Whakatakapokai (Care and Protection Residence), Manurewa

Visit date: 9(2)(a) 2017. Report date: 20 April 2018



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# Introduction

## Purpose of visit

1. On [redacted 9(2)(a)] 2017, Principal Advisor, [redacted 9(2)(a)], Senior Advisors, [redacted 9(2)(a)] and [redacted 9(2)(a)] and Advisor, [redacted 9(2)(a)] from the Office of the Children's Commissioner (OCC) conducted an unannounced monitoring visit to Whakatakapokai Care and Protection Residence, Manurewa. The purpose of our visit was to assess the quality of Oranga Tamariki's services against the six domains relevant to our role as a National Preventive Mechanism (NPM) under the Optional Protocol to the Convention Against Torture (OPCAT – refer to Appendix 1 for more detail). These domains are: treatment, protection system, material conditions, activities and contact with others, medical services and care, and personnel. As with every monitoring visit, we also focused on responsiveness to mokopuna Māori and the voices of young people.

## Mana Mokopuna

2. Mana Mokopuna is the lens our Office is now using to monitor all children's and young people's experiences of the care and protection and youth justice systems. The lens sits alongside the six OPCAT domains. It supports our monitoring to put a stronger focus on:
  - Children and young people's experiences; and
  - Māori beliefs and social structures.
3. Our concept of 'Mana Mokopuna' is aligned to the new concept in the new Oranga Tamariki Act 1989, 'mana tamaiti'. Both are embedded in the Māori concept of mana, which approximately translates into English as, 'respect, acquired knowledge, control, intrinsic value and dignity, influence'. All children and young people are born with mana. Mana can never cease, but it can be enhanced or diminished. Mana, within the context of our Mana Mokopuna lens, recognises that children and young people have the right to the same level of respect and treatment as adults.
4. As part of the Mana Mokopuna lens we have identified six key principles, all of which need to be present in children's and young people's lives in order to enhance their mana and for all mokopuna to thrive and reach their full potential. The principles and the definitions for them are outlined in Appendix 2.
5. These principles reflect and expand on what we have described as the three pou (supporting pillars) in the new Oranga Tamariki Act 1989 – whakapapa, whanaungatanga, and mana tamaiti. We note that the new provisions in the Oranga Tamariki Act 1989 will come in to full effect on 1 July 2019. Each Mana Mokopuna principle is supported by the new legislation as well as the rights for all children and young people set out in the United Nations Convention of the Rights of the Child (UNCROC). Some examples of this are shown in the table in Appendix 2.

## Structure of this report

6. This report shares the findings from our visit to Whakatakapokai Care and Protection Residence and makes recommendations for actions to address the issues identified. For the convenience of readers, we first list our key findings and recommendations. We then describe our findings for each of the six OPCAT domains.
7. For each OPCAT domain, we provide a statement that summarises our overall finding for that domain. Supporting evidence is then listed as strengths and areas for development. Children's experiences and voices are highlighted under their relevant Mana Mokopuna principle in a box under each individual OPCAT domain.
8. The rest of this report is structured as follows:
  - Appendix 1 - we briefly outline the legislative background to our visit
  - Appendix 2 - contains information about Mana Mokopuna lens and its relationship with the Oranga Tamariki Act
  - Appendix 2 - contains information about the interpretation of ratings
  - Appendix 3 - we describe the interviews we conducted and the information we accessed.

## Context

9. Whakatakapokai is a secure care and protection residence in Weymouth, Counties Manukau that has capacity for up to 20 young people aged 11-17 years.
10. At the time of our visit, Patiki unit was closed for refurbishment. There were 16 young people residing at the residence. Ten young people staying in the Hua Rakau unit, two young people in Taonga Whetū and four young people in the Pumanawa independent living flat.
11. It is the residence's plan to offer a range of different supported living environments, referred to as Ngā Pou Manaaki o Whakatakapokai (The Pillars of Whakatakapokai). The pou (pillars) form a range of specialist services that Whakatakapokai view as critical and essential to meet the needs of young people. The pou already in operation at Whakatakapokai include:
  - Hua Rakau (one of two main units)
  - Taonga Whetū (Kaupapa Māori unit outside of the secure part of the residence, which opened on 31 August 2017)

- Pumanawa (a transition programme which includes an independent living flat located outside of the secure part of the residence and intensive wrap around support to help young people move towards independence).

12. The pou not in operation at the time of our visit are:

- Patiki (one of two main units which was closed for refurbishment and is expected to open again by January 2018)
- A Dialectical Behaviour Therapy (DBT) Home (a residential community based programme in which the main treatment model is DBT)

13. When Patiki unit reopens, the two main units will be functioning as per the original structure. The DBT home is still in the planning stages.

## Key findings and recommendations



**Well placed with developing elements.**

14. Our overall rating for Whakatakapokai is *well placed with developing elements*. We believe that young people are safe from harm at this residence and we found no evidence of torture, or other cruel, inhuman or degrading treatment or punishment.

15. This year, ratings for two individual OPCAT domains improved:

- **Protection system** has significantly improved since our last visit. We commend the residence for moving from *developing with minimally effective elements* to *developing with well placed elements*. This is due to improved performance from the grievance panel, relatively satisfactory feedback from the young people, and grievance investigations being completed within the 14 day timeframe.
- **Material conditions** has improved since our last visit, shifting from *developing with minimally effective elements* to *developing*. Hua Rakau unit has been refurbished since our last visit; it has been freshly painted and new furniture has been purchased. However, while some window panes have been replaced, the remaining windows have extensive tagging on them. We believe there is room for further creativity, including improving the lighting and sound throughout the residence. The overall physical design is still not conducive to the child-centred, therapeutic environment that the residence is aspiring to achieve.

The Patiki unit, closed in October due to refurbishments, is due to reopen in January 2018. Having one less unit open means that the residence currently has fewer options for separating young people and moving them to different parts of the residence. We believe this is a contributing factor to the increased bullying amongst young people.

16. The ratings for two individual OPCAT domains deteriorated:

- **Treatment** received a rating of *well placed with developing elements*. This is a shift downwards from last year when the residence received a rating of *well placed*. While we found some transformational elements with respect to the range of specialist transition services on offer, there has been an increase in bullying amongst young people. We think this is partly due to inconsistent staff practices as well as the current living conditions, as explained further under material conditions domain.

- **Medical services and care** moved down from a rating of *well placed* to *well placed with developing elements*. We found that some young people at the residence were missing out on access to quality specialist mental health services. Although this is largely outside of the residence's control, we encourage Oranga Tamariki national office to work with the Office of the Director of Mental Health to resolve the issue.

17. The ratings for all other individual OPCAT domains remained the same. We commend the residence for continuing to provide purposeful and consistent training to staff that supports the therapeutic models in use at Whakatakāpokai. The residence manager also does an excellent job of encouraging staff to complete tertiary and post graduate qualifications.

18. The residence has many strengths. We found that young people at the residence:
- have a good understanding of the complaints system Whaia Te Maramatanga
  - eat well
  - have a good level of contact with their families and whānau
  - participate in a range of activities and programmes
  - have good access to primary health services
  - have good support for their transitions via specialist transition services e.g. Pumanawa and Taonga Whetū
  - have regular and meaningful opportunities to be exposed to Te Ao Māori.

19. We also identified a number of areas for development that, once addressed, will ensure greater consistency in the quality of care provided to young people. Some of the key areas for development include:

**For national office action:**

- tagging on windows and challenges with sound and lighting, even in the refurbished unit
- physical design of residence is not conducive to the well-being of young people
- a lack of consistent support from sites to ensure young people have smooth transitions back into the community
- Oranga Tamariki vetting processes for new employees
- Young people's inconsistent access to quality specialist mental health services.

**For the residence action:**

- lack of grievance advocates
- external supervision not being used in the most optimal way
- inconsistent staff practices
- Insufficient considerations of young people's ability to live independently in Taonga Whetū.

## Recommendations

The recommendations below sit alongside and are consistent with the recommendations and action points we gave in our State of Care May 2017 report (A focus on Oranga Tamariki secure residences).

### **A.**      **FOR NATIONAL OFFICE**

**Rec 1:** Oranga Tamariki national office builds into the current service changes, improvements to the level of support provided to young people transitioning out of residences and considers developing further transition support services such as Pumanawa **(as per State of Care May 2017 action point 3)**.

**Rec 2:** Oranga Tamariki is currently working on the design of the future care framework and the role residences will play in meeting the needs of different groups of children and young people. We look forward to being informed as the care framework is further developed and timeframes for its implementation **(as per State of Care May 2017 action point 10)**.

In the meantime, Oranga Tamariki Deputy Chief Executive for Care Services should work with Property Services to enhance the environment of existing residences to make them more youth friendly and conducive to the well-being of young people **(as per State of Care May 2017 action point 8)**.

This should include putting in place a more responsive and timely system to meet residences' repair and cleaning needs, e.g. to repaint over tagging, fix scratched windows, repair tears in the furniture **(as per State of Care May 2017 action point 9)**.

**Rec 3:** Oranga Tamariki Manager of Clinical Services collaborates with the Office of the Director of Mental Health to develop and implement a plan to ensure that young people at Whakatakāpokai receive consistent quality services from specialist child and adolescent mental health providers. **(as per State of Care May 2017 action point 13)**.

### **B.**      **FOR THE RESIDENCE**

**Rec 4:** The residence manager, in conjunction with staff, reviews the purpose and effectiveness of the current supervision arrangements and makes any necessary changes.

**Rec 5:** The residence leadership team takes steps to better understand the reasons behind an apparent increase in bullying between young people, particularly as it relates to staff practices.

**Rec 6:** The residence manager ensures that part of the selection process for young people to transition from the secure part of the residence to Taonga Whetū involves considering young people's ability to live independently and clearly communicates to young people the process they need to go through in order to live there.

# Findings for each OPCAT domain

## Domain 1: Treatment



**Well placed with developing elements.**

20. Young people at Whakatakapokai are treated well and, in general, have good relationships with staff. Challenging incidents are handled well and restraint levels are low. The specialist transition services on offer for young people via Ngā Pou Manaaki o Whakatakapokai have the potential to be transformational. However, other areas appear to have deteriorated. We found there had been an increase in bullying amongst young people.

### Young people's experiences

#### **Whanaungatanga:**

Most young people experience positive relationships with staff.

*"My favourite staff is [name] – she's real nice, if someone is bullying people she will tell people to stop but others don't do that. When she's around I will listen."*

Most young people have experienced some form of bullying while in Whakatakapokai.

*"We get picked on...mainly by the boys....sexually harassed even by the boys....they stuff like bend down, yeah bend down.... staff only respond when it comes to them, when they want"*

*"Staff did do a great job of splitting it up [fight amongst young people]. Staff were sometimes a bit slacker; they tried to keep calm so kids keep calm. I think they remained calm for a bit too long - before reacting. I've been kicked before but not hard; I'm a big build. As soon as I was kicked, the other YP went to secure. Staff jumped in immediately. They didn't expect it. Other YP went to secure; I didn't have to fight him for 5 mins".*

#### **Aroha:**

Most young people feel cared for by staff.

*"Aunty [staff members name] makes me the cool plans - love aunty [staff members name] and she loves me. Whenever she goes back home I say I love you aunty. And she says she loves me".*

#### **Rangatiratanga:**

Young people are frustrated about their lack of clear plans for their transitions.

*"When I talk to my (site) social worker she don't even have a clue what's going on..... she should be looking for a placement..... She just always comes here and tells me there's no placements across the country for girls your age"*

*"They don't give me a say in my plan; they ask me where I want to go; I write it down on paper and give it to them; in the last meeting I had I finally got what I actually wanted, but it took 6 years to get it."*

## Strengths

- **Relationship between staff and C&YP.** We observed staff responding warmly and appropriately to children and young people. Young people were able to identify key youth workers whom they have strong relationships with and to whom they go to for help and assistance.
- **Use of restraints and secure care.** We were told by staff that the time young people spend in secure is decreasing and the use of restraints has also decreased over the past three months. The recent SOSHI report from August – September 2017 shows there have been three restraints used on young people and few assaults by young people on staff. Staff explained that due to young people's high use of and addiction to drugs, secure care has been used as a place of detox for young people.
- **Model of therapeutic care.** The residence uses a number of models of therapeutic care which are suited to the different cohorts of young people and the different treatment options provided under Ngā Pou Manaaki o Whakatakapokai. These models of care include: DBT, Cognitive Behavioural Therapy (CBT), Circle of Courage and Sensory Modulation.
- **Quality of assessment and planning.** When young people first arrive at Whakatakapokai, the health team conducts a number of health screens, including for suicide, anxiety, alcohol and drug use and sexual health. Young people receive a health check from a nurse within 24 hours of admission and they also see a General Practitioner (GP) within 7 days of admission. One staff member explained that the requirement to write an Individual Care Plan (ICP) within 7 days of a young person being admitted is not a realistic timeframe to complete a quality ICP, which requires meaningful engagement with whānau to get their input. Case leaders complete initial safety plans for each young person which evolve into young people's Operational Plans. The Operational Plans guide floor staff's responses to young people.
- **Quality of interventions.** Young people receive DBT from case leaders and are supported in a DBT approach from care staff. Young people also receive speech and language therapy. SAFE network completes assessments and provides weekly treatment for young people with harmful sexual behaviour. The residence also provides equine therapy, occupational therapy and sensory modulation, depending on young people's needs.
- **Reviews.** Multiagency Team (MAT) meetings are usually held soon after a young person arrives at Whakatakapokai to contribute to the development of young people's ICP's. Thereafter, MAT meetings are held approximately monthly to review young people's ICP's and progress towards transition.

- **Involvement of children and young people.** Some of the young people we spoke to said they had a lot of input into their plans. Although young people are not involved in MAT meetings (as it is not practicable), they do attend a separate planning meeting regarding their journey at the residence. Young people participate in unit meetings every Sunday and there is also an active youth council.
- **Involvement of whānau.** Case leaders described how they regularly attempt to contact whānau and invite them to contribute their views towards young people's ICP's. However, staff acknowledged that involving whānau is an on-going challenge. Staff are also committed to ensuring whānau are kept informed about young people's transitions and involved with young people's plans.
- **How well challenging incidents are handled.** Since the last visit there has been a decrease in challenging incidents, including restraints on young people and assaults amongst young people. The recent challenging incidents that we heard about had been handled well. Staff described a challenging incident where two young people climbed on to the roof of one unit; staff immediately positioned themselves to surround the unit in case either young person fell or attempted to abscond. Staff attempted to de-escalate the young people and encourage them to come down from the roof. When the young people started to remove parts of the air conditioning unit, staff made the collective decision, with the support of leadership team members, to call Police. After the Police arrived, young people chose for themselves to descend from the roof. The staff then supported the young people to reflect on their behaviour. The staff involved were offered post incident supervision. As part of a debrief, staff also reflected on the incident and discussed what strategies should be put in place to prevent such incidents happening in the future.
- **Behaviour Management System (BMS).** Young people told us they believed the BMS was generally fair. However, they tend to get bored with the privileges and rewards being offered. Staff told us that approximately half of the young people are on individualised behaviour plans.

## Areas for development

- **Transitions between and from care.** There are a number of young people who have been at Whakatakāpokai for long periods of time. Oranga Tamariki sites are struggling to find placements for young people and, as a result, young people are feeling very frustrated, bored and let down. One young person advised that she continually hears from her site social worker that there are no placements for young women her age, as there are a lack of options throughout the country. This young person expressed significant frustration "*it makes me feel as though no one cares or wants us.*"

Whakatakapokai has addressed the need for stronger transition support services through the development of Pumanawa (transition programme) and Taonga Whetū (Kaupapa Māori unit). Pumanawa focuses on providing wrap around, holistic services to assist young people to transition to the community. The service includes an independent living flat that sits outside of the gates which is supported by the residence. Taonga Whetū also functions as a transition unit; it focuses on preparing young people to be able to live confidently in the community. We would like to see these transition support services grow further with more young people able to access them. We encourage national office to consider implementing these types of transition initiatives throughout the country, as well as improving the transition support provided by sites (*Recommendation 1, page 9 refers*).

- **Relationships amongst young people.** Most of the young people we spoke to said that they had either been involved in bullying behaviour or victims of bullying while at Whakatakapokai. Young people also told us that different care teams have inconsistent staff practices. Some staff show favouritism to some young people and others handle bullying between young people in different ways. The closed Patiki unit meant that the remaining unit was full and staff had no options for separating young people based on their differing needs and/or age. Patiki unit is due to reopen in mid December 2017 (*Recommendation 6, page 9 refers*).

**Photo 1.** Mural artwork along fence outside of Taonga Whetū unit.



## Domain 2: Protection system



**Developing with well placed elements.**

21. The protection system at the residence is working relatively well and has improved significantly since our last visit. Young people understand the Whaia te Maramatanga process well, and many have used the complaints system. However, grievance advocates were not yet operating at the time of our visit and some outcome letters to young people are unclear. For these reasons we have given this domain a rating of *developing with well-placed elements*. We look forward to seeing further progress at our next visit.

### Young people's experiences

#### **Kaitiakitanga:**

Young people know the Whaia te Maramatanga process well.

*"Yes - if not happy, I could tell the grievance coordinator and speak to the grievance panel; if not happy with grievance panel, then go to OCC. Never had to go to the panel or OCC; was happy with most outcomes."*

#### **Rangatiratanga:**

Some young people can clearly articulate their rights.

*"Youth Law comes around. They do rights about police and then they do other things like when police come up to you and you can walk away if they don't arrest you and what to do when police approach you. My rights in here - you are allowed to be in your room if you are sick. If I was to do a complaint I could do a grievance or go to panel or tell management"*

Some young people feel that things change at the residence as a result of their feedback.

*"Made one grievance for my jacket - got taken by other young person - staff member got back to me - didn't get jacket back in the end. But got \$400 for the jacket"*

A young person's feedback on Whaia te Maramatanga process:

*"If I was to change it....make it shorter, not 2 weeks, because in between that time a whole lot of other stuff happens, things get way worser. And to actually look in to what the grievance is about not just what staff say. Make it clear to us what is gona happen."*

## Strengths

- **Admission to residence.** Young people are well informed of the Whaia te Maramatanga process upon admission.
- **Young people's understanding of the rules and their rights.** Young people know the rules and their rights and are able to articulate these clearly. For example, young people understand that after 72 hours in secure care, Oranga Tamariki has to apply for an extension through the court system. Young people were also able to articulate their rights when it came to Police.
- **Administration of the Whaia te Maramatanga complaints process.** Grievance investigations are timely and are completed within the 14 day timeframe.
- **Youth people's understanding and use of the Whaia te Maramatanga.** Young people told us that they generally feel safe to make a complaint. Young people know how to make a grievance, and the recent grievance reports show that grievances are regularly being made. There is a regular time slot on Sunday afternoons to remind young people about the BMS, journey goals and Whaia te Maramatanga.
- **Grievance panel.** Grievance panel members visit the residence approximately weekly. Young people were able to identify at least one of the panel members who they have good rapport with. Compared to our last visit in December 2016, there has been a significant increase in responsiveness from the grievance panel, and this was confirmed from interviews with young people and staff.

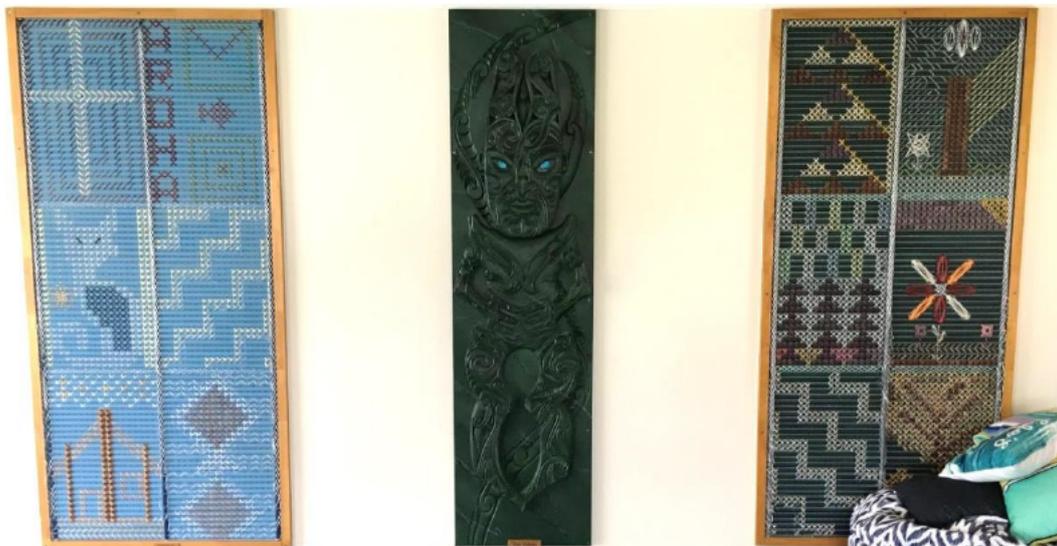
## Areas for development

- **Grievance advocates.** The residence has not had active independent grievance advocates for some time. Recently two community workers from Manurewa Marae who facilitate programs at Whakatakopokai with the young people have had background checks completed. They are in the process of an induction to enable them to start their role as grievance advocates. It is intended that the two advocates will visit the residence outside of their program facilitation role, to engage with the young people in their role as grievance advocates. We recommend as per the Oranga Tamariki Grievance Advocacy Manual 2016, that the advocates visit the residence weekly (in their role as a grievance advocates) in order to build relationships with the young people.
- **Grievance outcome letters.** Outcome letters to young people are not consistently clear and young people do not always completely understand the outcome of their grievances.

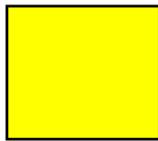
**Photo 2.** Whaia te Maramatanga and BMS information in central unit area.



**Photo 3.** Tukutuku panels and carving, created by young people.



## Domain 3: Material conditions



**Developing.**

22. It is encouraging to see that the Hua Rakau unit has been refurbished since our last visit, and the Patiki unit is expected to be finished by the end of the year. However, in common with most other Oranga Tamariki residences, the physical design of Whakatakopakai is not conducive to the child-centred, therapeutic environment that the residence is trying to achieve. We were unable to view the residential flat due to the young people being off-site at the time of our visit. Taonga Whetū and the outside environment of the residence are pleasant and well maintained. Overall the food is nutritional and the young people have a range of meal choices.

### Young people's experiences

#### **Kaitiakitanga:**

Young people find the food okay, they like the salad tank bar specifically.

*"Foods alright – can be too much even – we get heaps of food"*

*"I would rather be at home. But here I get food 4-5 times a day and I don't have to pay for anything."*

*"The salad tank bar is the best, we get to choose and make what we want"*

Some young people are frustrated with living in such close quarters with so many other young people.

*"I feel safe here pretty much. But this place drives me crazy some people in your face 24 hours."*

### Strengths

- **Inside environment.** The refurbishments to Hua Rakau unit were completed in October 2017. Taonga Whetū unit is clean, bright and well looked after. The young people's bedrooms in Taonga Whetū were colourful and youth friendly.
- **Outside environment.** The residence has an outdoor pool, gymnasium and a pleasant open courtyard, which includes a trampoline and garden.

- **Food.** The menu is varied and the young people are given a choice of two meals for lunch and dinner daily. The young people are also given the opportunity to provide written feedback on their meals daily. The young people were positive about the tank salad bar, whereby they are given a selection of produce to create their own salad.

## Areas for development

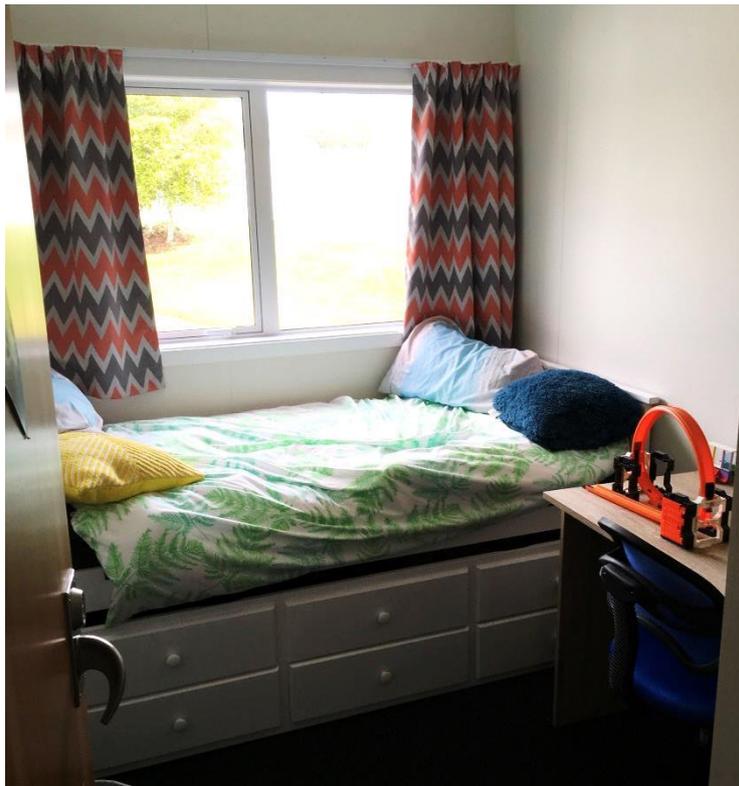
- **Inside environment.** Due to Patiki unit being closed for refurbishment, the residence has fewer options for separating young people who are not getting along with each other. This places extra challenges on complex young people living in close proximity to each other and extra demands on staff to manage young people's challenging behaviours. Most of the young people we spoke to confirmed that they had either been involved in bullying behaviour or been victims of bullying.

Although Hua Rakau unit had completed refurbishments in October 2017, only three out of seven of the window panes had been replaced. The remaining window panes had extensive tagging on them. The unit had been re-painted and new furniture had been purchased. We believe there is room for further creativity, including improving the lighting and sound throughout the residence. The lighting in places, for example the phone room, was very dark, with no natural light. The units also have poor quality acoustics. The sound throughout the main Hua Rakau unit, including in the phone room, echoed, making it difficult for young people to hear each other or staff to concentrate (*Recommendation 2, page 9 refers*).

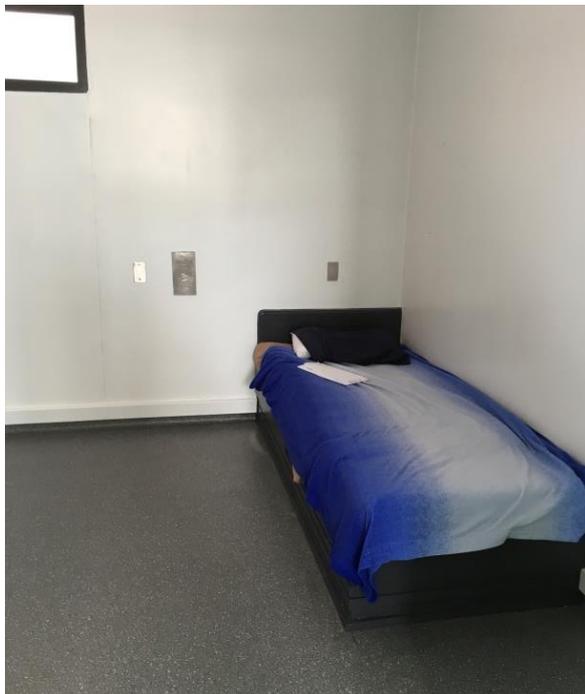
**Photo 4.** Hua Rakau refurbished unit - main central area.



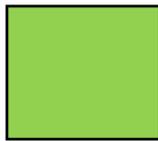
**Photo 5.** A young person's bedroom in Taonga Whetū.



**Photo 6.** Secure unit bedroom and **Photo 7.** Telephone room for young people.



## Domain 4: Activities and contact with others



**Well placed.**

23. There is a diverse range of recreational, vocational, sporting and culturally focussed activities and programmes for young people. There is a strong focus on essential life skills including personal hygiene, safe relationships, money management and cooking. Young people have good access to their families and whānau.

### Young people's experiences

#### **Mātauranga:**

Young people enjoy learning and have opportunities to participate in a range of activities.

*"I do kapahaka, mau rākau, sometimes te reo. We do heaps of programmes here"*

*"I love learning, but sometimes the work is too easy. I get too frustrated"*

*"I get to go off site like every Wednesday"*

#### **Whanaungatanga:**

Most Young people are satisfied with the contact they have with whānau.

*"I can see my mum more often now – three times a week"*

*"[Staff member] has helped me out a lot - new clothes, food to my mum. In a couple of weeks' time we are all going to Rainbow's End for my birthday - with Mum and brothers. We have actually never been to public places; like the closest to public places is a restaurant; we have been to a restaurant once. I want us all to go to Rainbow's end. [Staff member] will support me to do this and have something to work towards."*

## Strengths

- **Young people's participation in activities and programmes.** Activities and programmes are well co-ordinated and the young people we spoke with were positive about the diversity and availability of programmes offered. The residence runs a 12 week structured day which revolves around building knowledge and skills in the following areas: managing and preventing bullying, loving yourself, team work, kindness, generosity, respect and social skills. The residence has good relationships with a number of external providers, who either provide programmes throughout the school term or as part of the school holiday programme. Some of these external providers include: YouthLaw, Ngā Hakinakina Māori (Māori games) with Waitakere Sports, Watersafe Auckland, Manurewa Marae, SPCA Pet Therapy, Family Planning and Rape Prevention Education, Te Whānau o Tumanako (mentoring sports) and Big Foot Adventures which includes rock climbing and mountain biking.
- **Activities and learning at school.** Young people expressed a desire for more challenging learning during school hours. We know there will be a new education provider starting in January 2018. We look forward to hearing from the young people at our next visit about whether they believe their school learning environment has improved.
- **Young people's contact with family and whānau.** The residence has a strong whānau-centered approach. Staff are committed to supporting young people's whānau and are ensuring that young people have regular and meaningful contact with their whānau. Taonga Whetū unit helps to facilitate young people's contact with whānau. The unit has a warm and spacious whānau room and extra bedrooms for whānau members to stay, if they require. One young person told us how he visits his family three times per week in preparation for his transition. We heard of multiple stories of the residence going 'above and beyond' to ensure that young people have access to their whānau. For example, a young person who was staying in Taonga Whetū could not get through to her grandmother for several days. The residence ended up transporting the young person with a staff member to the grandmother's house to check on the grandmother and to ensure that the young person could spend time with her. We also heard of the residence manager supporting whānau with food parcels and advocating for families to access the right financial support in order to be able to pay rent and visit their child in Whakatakāpokai.

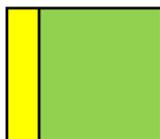
**Photo 8. Taonga Whetū unit – Whānau Room.**



**Photo 9. Central courtyard and basketball courts.**



## Domain 5: Medical services and care



**Well placed with developing elements.**

24. Young people have excellent access to quality primary health care services. However, young people's access to specialist mental health and alcohol and other drug (AOD) services varies depending on their address outside of the residence. Although this is largely outside of the residence's control, we encourage national office to facilitate a solution as soon as possible.

### Young people's experiences

#### **Kaitiakitanga:**

Young people feel they have good access to primary health care services.

*"Health is really good, just got root canal done. Cost like \$5000. We have one [nurse] down there and when we need her we just ask."*

*"Seen a nurse. She was good. I know who to talk to if I feel sick - would talk to staff to ask if I could go see nurse."*

*"I'm doing CADS (Community Alcohol and Drug Service) while in here. For meth and glue and gas. Meth makes you stay up and glue makes you see stuff that isn't there."*

### Strengths

- **Young people's access to primary care services.** 9(2)(i) is the provider who delivers primary health care to the young people at Whakatakāpokai. The on-site health team consists of two part time nurses and a visiting GP. The GP regularly visits the residence once per week and will visit a second time if needed. 9(2)(i) has brought a number of health services into the residence which have further improved young people's access to primary health care. These health services include: immunisations, sexual health, dental care, mobile x-rays and a physiotherapist.

**Young people's access to specialist mental health and alcohol and other drug (AOD) services.** The on-site health team advised that due to the complexity of the

young people, there is a high need for regular specialist mental health input into young people's treatment. The residence receives regular in-reach specialist mental health services from [REDACTED] 9(2)(i). We heard that young people who have access to 9(2)(i) specialist mental health services receive a very responsive service. The residence manager is committed to ensuring that young people receive the health services they require and is prepared to contract specific services when these are not available. For example, the residence was paying for two young people to see a private psychologist and counsellor.

Residence staff and the on-site health team spoke of the increased number of young people coming to Whakatakopokai who are addicted to methamphetamine and synthetic drugs. The residence manager has recently contracted [REDACTED] 9(2)(i) to scope what is needed for young people to safely detox at the residence. Currently, the residence is using secure care as a place for young people to detox. The on-site health team are responsible for providing specialist oversight of young people's detox plans, and where required, the monitoring of a young person during the time they are detoxing. For example, staff spoke of a young person who required a nurse to monitor them closely while they detoxed in the secure unit and the residence manager contracted a nurse to fulfill this role. Although it is not ideal for young people to be detoxing at the residence, we commend the residence manager for initiating action to ensure that young people can detox safely. National office is aware of the work going on to determine what is needed to support young people to detox at the residence and would like to see this work shared with other residences when finalised.

## Areas for development

- **Young people's access to specialist mental health and alcohol and other drug (AOD) services.** Young people who are serviced by [REDACTED] 9(2)(i) specialist mental health services are not receiving the same level of care as that provided by 9(2)(i). The on-site health team expressed their concerns about the service that [REDACTED] 9(2)(i) provides. Young people's access to specialist mental health providers is determined by their home address outside of the residence. Any young person from south Auckland (close to where the residence is located) is covered by [REDACTED] 9(2)(i). All other young people (who reside outside of south Auckland) are covered by 9(2)(i)'s in-reach services. The health team described this as a "post code lottery" system. This is outside of the residence's control. Although it is desirable to have continuity of specialist mental health services as young people transition in and out of the residence, we heard that the quality of service provided by [REDACTED] 9(2)(i) means that young people from south Auckland are not able to access quality specialist mental health services. Clearly, this is unacceptable.

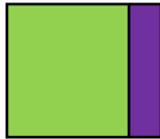
We know that Oranga Tamariki's Manager Clinical Services met with the residence manager and the Clinical Director of 9(2)(i) in October 2017, where the quality of services provided by 9(2)(i) was discussed. However, as yet there is no clear resolution. We encourage Oranga Tamariki's Manager of Clinical Services to follow this issue up with the Office of the Director of Mental Health to ensure there are clear actions in place to resolve the issue (*Recommendation 4, page 9 refers*).

**Administration of medication.** Due to the time involved, residence staff administer medication to young people and not the on-site health team. Residence staff receive regular training from the on-site health team on the administration of young people's medication. Despite this, the on-site health team expressed concerns about the administration of medication. They are concerned that the medication is not being administered consistently, and advised that the current system is not robust enough. Although there was no evidence of there actually being an issue with administration of medication at Whakatakāpokai, we agree there is the potential for inconsistent administration due to the nature of staff's work. For example, it is common for staff to be called away from a unit to undertake other tasks. Therefore, we encourage the residence to review if improvements could be made to the current system to reduce the risk of distraction while medication is being administered.

**Photo 10.** Television room in Hua Rakau unit.



## Domain 6: Personnel



**Well placed with transformational elements.**

25. Whakatakapokai is at the forefront of moving residences to a much higher standard of qualifications and skills. The residence manager is committed to encouraging and supporting staff to gain tertiary and/or post graduate qualifications throughout the time staff are employed at Whakatakapokai. Staffing levels are sufficient to provide adequate care to children and young people. The training on offer is comprehensive and purposeful. Currently about 90% of staff have tertiary qualifications. For these reasons, we have given this domain a rating of *well-placed with transformational elements*.

### Strengths

- **Staff recruitment.** The residence leadership team takes a strategic approach to recruiting tertiary qualified staff, including those who have the multidisciplinary and cultural skills to engage with Māori. The residence manager had recently appointed two new clinical team leaders and youth workers to work in Taonga Whetū and Pumanawa.
- **Staff levels.** In total Whakatakapokai supports 76 FTE permanent positions, with the majority of staff working full time. There are another seven staff on the casual roster who fill in when required. At the time of our visit, Whakatakapokai had only six job vacancies. The residence manager was in the process of recruiting new staff, with a number of job interviews taking place during our visit.
- **Staff induction and training.** The residence's induction and training for staff continues to be a strength. Training is comprehensive and purposefully designed to support staff to meet the needs of the young people and the professional development plans of staff. For the past six months, staff have received training from a number of internal and external providers, including on the following topics:
  - Sensory modulation
  - Effective communication with young people – provided by Talking Trouble
  - Dialectical Behavioural Therapy (DBT)
  - Cognitive Behavioural Therapy (CBT)
  - Trauma informed practice – provided by Brainwave
  - Circle of Courage
  - Rolling with Resilience
  - Management of Actual and Potential Aggression (MAPA)

We heard examples of staff using what they learnt in the training to identify when young people might be feeling stressed and support them to de-escalate or regulate their behaviour.

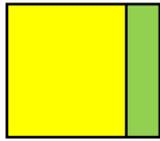
- **Staff supervision and coaching.** The residence manager has a contract with an external provider, **9(2)(i)** to supervise all staff who want it. The external supervisor is on-site twice a week and runs a number of group and one-on-one sessions, depending on what staff request. **9(2)(i)** also provides supervision to staff after a serious incident has taken place. Although there is regular supervision available, we heard from some of the care team and case leaders that they don't tend to access the supervision available. Case leaders told us they receive informal peer supervision and individual supervision from their team leader clinical practice (TLCP) approximately once every 6-8 weeks.

We suggest that the residence manager reviews the purpose and effectiveness of the current supervision arrangements to ensure that the supervision skills of the supervisor they are using, match the knowledge of the staff and the nature of their work. Staff may benefit from a supervisor who is trained and experienced in the key areas of training and therapeutic models that are used at the residence (*Recommendation 5, page 9 refers*).

**Photo 11.** Central courtyard area.



## Domain 7: Responsiveness to mokopuna Māori



**Developing with well placed elements.**

26. Overall the residence is responsive to the needs of mokopuna Māori. This is fostered by a number of key Māori staff employed at the residence and the relationship the residence has with mana whenua and Manurewa Marae. Mokopuna Māori have multiple opportunities to see their culture positively portrayed, and to develop a sense of pride in their culture. We have rated this domain as *developing with well placed elements*, as Taonga Whetū is a new initiative for Whakatakapokai and is still very much in the developing stages.

### Young people's experiences

#### **Whakapapa:**

Young people are learning about where they come from.

*"[Staff member] teaches me about my culture and there are some Māori staff that teach me about my culture and [staff member] organises people to come in. He taught me how to carve and the Māori gods and stuff. Like Tawhirimātea. About in September we did the Māori quiz. I learnt what iwi I was in - [iwi affiliation]."*

#### **Whanaungatanga:**

Young people and their families experience strong relationships with Taonga Whetū staff.

*"[Staff member] does the culture stuff with me and family stuff, he has a good relationship with my mum."*

#### **Mātauranga:**

Young people expressed they want to move to Taonga Whetu.

*"I wana learn more te reo...learn more about the culture itself...don't get much of that unless we in Taonga Whetu. I wana go to Taonga Whetu, when I get there I wana give it a good go."*

**Photo 12.** Te Ārai o te Māngai Wharenui – Taonga Whetū unit.



## Strengths

- **Residence’s vision for mokopuna Māori.** Whakatakapokai has a clear direction to improve responsiveness for mokopuna Maori. The vision is *“to support our mokopuna so that they can be proud of their cultural heritage and national identity, have confidence, pride and sustained personal growth within their whānau, hapū, iwi and the greater community.”*
- **New Kaupapa Māori unit.** Taonga Whetū or ‘star treasure’ was officially launched on 31 August 2017. The newly refurbished unit, attached to the residence’s marae, sits outside the secure gates of the residence providing six beds to mokopuna Māori who choose to be a part of the programme. Taonga Whetū operates under the framework of Te Toka Tumoana (Oranga Tamariki indigenous and bicultural principled practice framework) and the Porowhita Maia (otherwise known as Circle of Courage, which is a model of positive youth development).

Two young people were staying in Taonga Whetū at the time of our visit. These young people valued having what they called “more freedom” including choosing the food they eat. They told us that in Taogna Whetū they have the opportunities to:

- speak te reo
- sing and learn waiata

- live in a Te Ao Māori environment that is more youth friendly compared to the secure part of the residence
  - spend time with a smaller number of other young people, compared to the secure part of the residence.
  - go off-site for courses and activities.
- **Young people’s participation in cultural activities and programmes.** There are regular on-going opportunities for young people to participate in cultural programmes and activities inside and outside of Taonga Whetū. These cultural programmes include: kapa haka, te reo Māori, waiata and carving. There are multiple examples of activities and events in place which support the enhancement of well-being for mokopuna Maori. We heard of young people being told of pūrākau (Māori narratives) and stories of renowned Māori rangatira within their iwi/whakapapa lines. For example, when a young person realised his father came from the Apiata line, a staff member explained to the young person the whakapapa and connections that the Apiata whānau has to the Whakatohea region (the young person was from this area) and the story of Willie Apiata and the medals and recognition he has received for his service to the NZ Army. These stories give young people something special to hold on to and a positive connection to their whakapapa.
  - **Residence’s access to cultural advice and support.** Whakatakopokai has a dedicated cultural advisor role. This role has been significant to the creation and operation of Taonga Whetū and the residence’s overall vision and support for mokopuna Māori. Taonga Whetū has a dedicated Team Leader Operations (TLO) who provides supervision for the Taonga Whetū staff. The residence also has an active kaumatua.
  - **Residence’s relationship with mana whenua and Māori social service organisations.** The residence has a strong relationship with Manurewa Marae and mana whenua (Tainui). The residence also has a good relationship with a local Māori health provider, 9(2)(i), who delivers some tikanga Māori health services to young people and their families at the residence.

## Areas for development

- **Transitioning into Taonga Whetū.** Staff described that, at times, the increased independence that young people have while in Taonga Whetū can be a challenge as young people are not used to such freedom coming from secure residence. We heard of a number of young people who had stayed in Taonga Whetū since the launch in August, whose stay had not lasted long. The young people either absconded or broke the rules and had been returned to the secure residence. Residence staff advised they had reflected a lot on these incidents and were looking to put safeguards in place to reduce the chances of such incidents happening again.

As a result of their reflections, staff now have an increased focus on young people's transitions from the secure residence into Taonga Whetū to ensure young people are ready for the move. This includes slowing down the transition from the secure residence to Taonga Whetū. This involves the young person visiting Taonga Whetū more often for lunches and activities prior to their move into the unit. Staff have also increased their engagement with whānau to increase their level of involvement during the transition period. This also helps to ensure there is a collaborative approach with whānau to supporting young people to meet their goals while they are living in Taonga Whetū.

- **Young people's eligibility for Taonga Whetū.** The eligibility criteria for Taonga Whetū includes:
  - the young person wanting to be a part of the programme
  - a completed cultural assessment
  - whānau engagement (ideally)
  - the young person has 6 months left in care.

There is an induction process for young people's admission into the unit. However, given the challenges described above in successfully transitioning young people into the unit, we believe that a broader assessment is needed to ensure that part of the selection process involves considering young people's readiness to live independently.

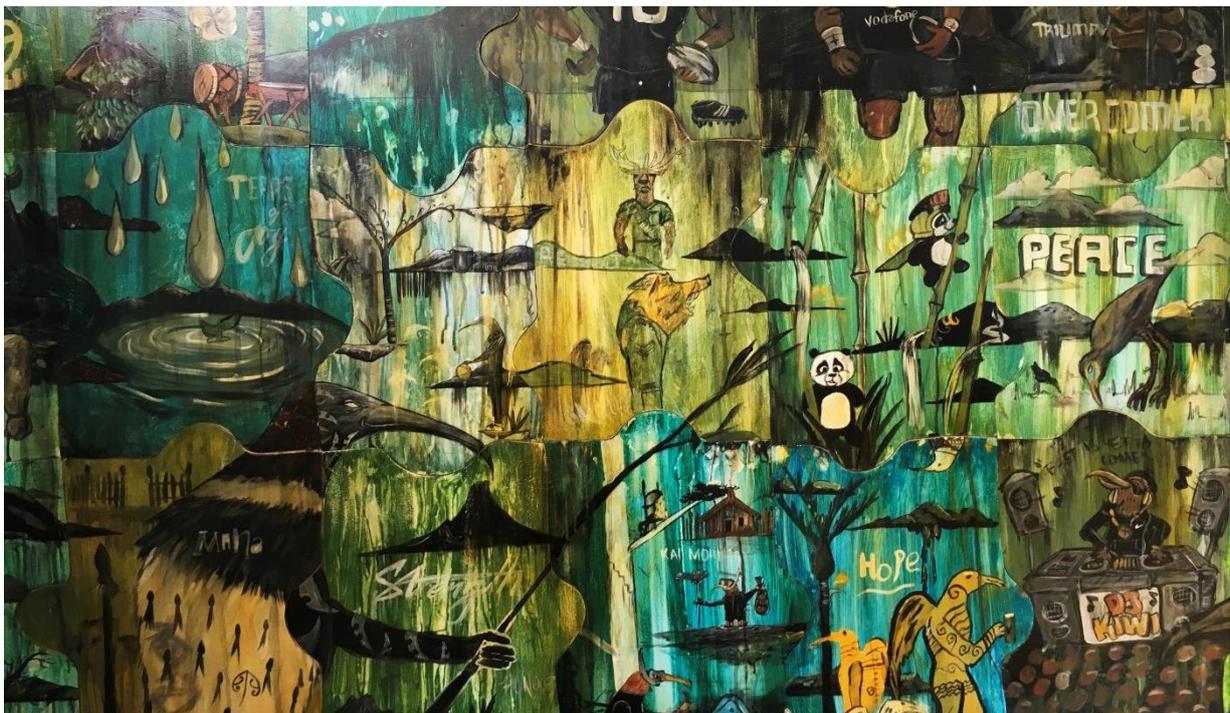
- **Communication with young people.** Many young people we spoke to in the secure residence mentioned their desire to move to Taonga Whetū and didn't understand why they weren't allowed to move to Taonga Whetū. Some young people told us they had received mixed messages from staff as to the reasons why they could not move there. It is important that young people themselves understand who is eligible to live in the unit and the process they need to go through in order to live there. This will require clear communication with young people once the assessment process for admission is clarified and agreed upon.
- **Taonga Whetū staffing.** We heard that recruiting the right staff, and in particular skilled Māori staff, to work in Taonga Whetū has and continues to be a challenge. The Ministry vetting process for new employees continues to be a barrier to hiring the most suitable staff. We frequently hear about potentially suitable staff being excluded due to historic offences. At the time of our visit, interviews were taking place for two roles within Taonga Whetū (*Recommendation 3, page 9 refers*).

**Developing stages of Taonga Whetū.** We admire the residence's aspiration to establish a kaupapa Māori unit, however, further work is required to fully reach this goal. Although the unit currently enables young people to reside in a cultural setting and have cultural experiences, it does not yet have sufficient capability to fulfil their vision of enabling mokopuna to fully connect with their whānau, hapū and iwi.

Taonga Whetu is also aiming to function as a transition unit. The dual functions of the unit create some complexity that need further thought. For example, mokopuna Māori should have the right to live within a Te Ao Māori environment. However, if they break the rules while living in Taonga Whetū, they could be moved back into one of the secure units. This results in young people who do not have the skills to live independently or breaking the rules of the unit having limited access to benefit from living in a Te Ao Māori environment (*Recommendation 7, page 9 refers*).

Wherever possible, we encourage the residence to find culturally appropriate ways of dealing with rule breaking in Taonga Whetū. At the same time, it is important that the residence continues to find ways for young people who are unable to live independently to be exposed to Te Ao Māori. As Taonga Whetū is a new initiative for Whakatakapokai and is still very much in the developing stages, we look forward to seeing further progress and development at our next visit.

**Photo 13.** Artwork created by young people.



## **Appendix One: Why we visit (legislative background)**

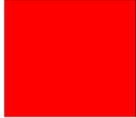
27. The Children's Commissioner has a statutory responsibility to monitor and assess the services provided under the Oranga Tamariki Act 1989. Specifically, section 13(1) (b) of the Children's Commissioner Act 2003, states that the Commissioner must monitor and assess the policies and practices of Child, Youth and Family and encourage the development of policies and services that are designed to promote the welfare of children and young people.
28. In addition, the Office of the Children's Commissioner is designated as a National Preventive Mechanism (NPM) under the Crimes of Torture Act (1989). This Act contains New Zealand's practical mechanisms for ensuring compliance with the United Nations Convention Against Torture and other Cruel, Inhuman, or Degrading Treatment or Punishment (OPCAT), which was itself ratified by New Zealand in 2007. Our role is to visit youth justice and care and protection residences to ensure compliance with OPCAT.

## Appendix Two: Mana Mokopuna lens and its relationship with the Oranga Tamariki Act

Principle	Definition	Oranga Tamariki Act 1989
<b>Whakapapa</b>	Children and young people know of, and are able to connect to places, ancestors, events and stories related to their whakapapa.	s4(1)(g) states that the purpose of this Act is to promote the well-being of children, young persons, and their families, whānau, hapū, iwi, and family groups by recognising whakapapa for children and young persons who come to the attention of the department.
<b>Whanaungatanga</b>	Children and young people have meaningful and life changing relationships with their families, whānau, hapū, iwi and family group and with the people around them and the people that matter to them.	s4(1)(h) states the purpose of the Act is to maintain and strengthen the relationships between children and young persons who come to the attention of the department and their family, whānau, hapū, iwi and family groups.
<b>Aroha</b>	Children and young people feel loved and cared for and are capable of receiving love and giving love to others. They know that the people around them believe in their potential.	s4(1)(e)(i)(ii) states where children and young people require care under the Act, they have a safe, stable, and loving home from the earliest opportunity; and support to address their needs.
<b>Kaitiakitanga</b>	Children and young people are safe and healthy in all aspects of their holistic wellbeing and are thriving in safe and healthy environments.	s5(1)(i) states that children and young people's rights set out in UNCROC must be respected and upheld and they must be protected from harm and treated with dignity and respect at all times.
<b>Rangatiratanga</b>	Children and young people and their families, whānau, hapū, iwi, and family groups, have a voice in decisions that impact on them. They know their rights and can exercise those rights and are assisted to take the lead in decisions about their lives.	s5(1)(a) makes explicit children and young people's right to participate in decisions that affect them. Section 5(1)(c)(iv) states the child or young person's sense of belonging, whakapapa, and the whanaungatanga responsibilities of their family, whānau, hapū, iwi and family group should be recognised and respected.
<b>Mātauranga</b>	Mokopuna Māori experience learning that enables them to walk confidently in both Te Ao Māori and Te Ao Pakeha. Children from other cultures have meaningful and life changing opportunities to learn about their culture and the culture of tangata whenua.	s5(1)(vi)(A-H) states that a holistic approach should be taken that sees the child or young person as a whole person which includes the child or young person's developmental potential, education and health needs, whakapapa, cultural identity, gender identity, sexual orientation, disability and age. UNCROC articles 29 & 30 make it explicit that education should develop each child's personality and talents to the full and that children have the right to learn and use the language and customs of their families.

## Appendix Three: Interpretation of ratings

29. The Table below provides a quick reference to the meanings of ratings given in the report.

Rating	Assessment	What it means
	Transformational/outstanding	Exceptional, outstanding, innovative, out of the norm
	Well placed	Strong performance, strong capability, consistent practice
	Developing	Some awareness of areas needing improvement; some actions to address weaknesses, but inconsistent practice; pockets of good practice
	Minimally effective/weak	Low awareness of areas needing improvement; lack of action to address weaknesses; significant concerns exist
	Detrimental	Actively causing harm, negligent, ignoring, rejecting, undervaluing, undermining practice

**Note:** For more detail on the meanings of each rating for the individual sub-domains assessed, refer to our evaluative rubric: <http://www.occ.org.nz/assets/Publications/RUBRIC/Evaluative-Rubric-FULL.pdf>

## **Appendix Four: Interviews conducted and information accessed**

Our visit to [residence name] included interviews with:

- 10 Young people
- Residence Manager
- Team Leaders Operations (TLOs)
- Team Leader of Clinical Practice (TLCP)
- Care (or residential) team
- Clinical team
- Health team
- Education team
- Māori Leadership group
- Kitchen staff
- Programme and Employment Coordinators

The following sources of information also informed our analysis:

- Visual inspection of the residence
- Residence profile
- Last CYF audit report
- Grievance quarterly reports and electronic register
- Residence management reports (for three months prior to the visit)
- Training register (for 12 months prior to visit)
- Young people's files at the residence (including Individual Care Plans and Operational Plans)
- Secure care register, secure care log book, and unit log books