



**Response from Oranga Tamariki and Kia Puāwai
to recommendations from the Office of the
Children's Commissioner's monitoring visit to:**

Hillsborough Lighthouse

Visit date – April 2023

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Introduction

The Hillsborough Lighthouse (the Lighthouse) is in part a Youth Justice Community Remand home and also provides a safe place to stay for rangatahi aged 11 to 17 years, often for a short period, at short notice in an emergency.

The Lighthouse provides unplanned crisis care in times of need, such as when rangatahi have nowhere else to stay, or when they have committed an offence. The residence is owned by Oranga Tamariki, and managed and operated by Kia Puāwai, a national non-government organisation approved to deliver care services under section 396 of the Oranga Tamariki Act 1989. The Lighthouse is located in Hillsborough, Auckland.

In April 2023, staff from the Office of the Children's Commissioner¹ (OCC) completed an announced monitoring visit to the Hillsborough Lighthouse.

The Lighthouse has capacity to take five rangatahi tāne (males). Under the Oranga Tamariki Act 1989, the legal status which rangatahi are detained on remand at the home include:

- section 235 - Child or young person who is arrested may be placed in custody of chief executive
- section 238(1)(d) - Custody of child or young person pending hearing.

Rangatahi with a Care and Protection legal status may also be admitted to the home.

The purpose of the visit was to assess the quality of Oranga Tamariki services against the seven domains relevant to the OCC's role as a National Preventive Mechanism under the Optional Protocol to the Convention Against Torture and Cruelty (OPCAT). The seven domains are:

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

The draft OPCAT report was shared with Oranga Tamariki on 3 July 2023 and with Kia Puāwai on 8 July 2023. Oranga Tamariki and Kia Puāwai have collaborated to prepare this joint response to the Systemic and Facility Recommendations.

¹ The OCC is now known as Mana Mokopuna—Children and Young People's Commission (the Commission)

Recommendations Summary

The OPCAT report for the Hillsborough Lighthouse makes seven recommendations, all of which are accepted.

We value the feedback we receive from the OCC and use recommendations to make improvements where possible. For this report, the OCC acknowledged several areas of excellent practice and made a range of positive observations about the quality of the care mokopuna were receiving at the Lighthouse.

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

Recommendations	Status
Oranga Tamariki Systemic Recommendations	
1. Support community run remand homes to develop an independent complaints system.	Accepted
2. Support community run remand homes to develop a process that will enable independent youth advocates to provide services to mokopuna in the whare.	Accepted
3. Develop a nationwide package of training programmes designed specifically for community run remand homes. Training programmes could include: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • criminogenic risk factors • mental health needs • intellectual disability • neurodiversity • alcohol and drug support • life skills, and • cultural development/ capacity building. 	Accepted
4. Assess property maintenance requirements and complete repairs and upgrades in a timely manner. Consider how mokopuna can personalise their living space.	Accepted
Kia Puāwai Facility Recommendations	
1. Provide formal supervision and complete professional development paths for kaimahi.	Accepted
2. Support whānau to visit mokopuna in the whare.	Accepted
3. Consider an increase to operational funding for the whare that reflects the increases to costs of living.	Accepted

The Oranga Tamariki and Kia Puāwai responses to the Hillsborough Lighthouse OPCAT report recommendations are detailed in the remaining sections of this report.

Response to Oranga Tamariki Systemic Recommendations

Below are the Oranga Tamariki and Kia Puāwai responses to the systemic recommendations made in the Hillsborough Lighthouse OPCAT report.

Recommendation 1

Support community run remand homes to develop an independent complaints system.

Response – Oranga Tamariki

As part of the Oranga Tamariki (National Care Standards and Related Matters) Regulations 2018, every tamaiti and rangatahi is entitled to receive information about what they can expect in our care or custody, and that of our partners, and to be supported to raise any concerns they have. This includes ensuring information about making complaints, accessing support services, and independent advocacy is available to all tamariki and rangatahi. This applies to all our provider-run youth justice community remand homes and includes the Hillsborough Lighthouse.

Following the implementation of the Oversight of Oranga Tamariki System Act 2022 and regulations (the Oversight Act) on 1 May 2023, the Ombudsman’s jurisdiction expanded to include s396 and s364 care or custody partners who will be subject to the same requirements as Oranga Tamariki. The Oversight Act also strengthened the role of the Ombudsman in undertaking reviews of complaints, including complaints about decisions made by Grievance Panels, and conducting investigations. Individuals can approach the Ombudsman directly at any point, before, during or following a complaint being considered by Oranga Tamariki.

In August 2021, Oranga Tamariki commenced a review of its feedback and complaints systems. This project, Manaaki Kōrero, involves Oranga Tamariki partnering with VOYCE – Whakarongo Mai to enable tamariki, rangatahi and whānau to co-design feedback, complaints, information, advice, and assistance processes that are ‘fit-for-whānau’. It also addresses Action 1.4 of our [Future Direction Plan](#). Refer to systemic recommendation 3 for more detail on our future direction.

While this co-design work is underway, Oranga Tamariki is implementing a set of immediate improvements to the residential grievance process, based on feedback from tamariki and rangatahi. Over the next few months identified improvements to be implemented include:

- Improving the language and accessibility of tools/resources.
- Developing multiple mechanisms to support tamariki and rangatahi to make a complaint.
- Improving investigation standards and training for kaimahi.
- Increasing the profile of advocacy in residences.
- Teaching self-advocacy as a social skill.

Oranga Tamariki has shared the learnings from Manaaki Kōrero immediate improvements to the residence grievance process work with Kia Puāwai. This will help support their development of an independent complaints process.

This recommendation was also discussed at the kanohi ki te kanohi bi-annual hui in May 2023 with the team leaders of Oranga Tamariki-run and contracted provider-run youth justice community remand homes. Complaints and the importance of having an independent complaints process was discussed. Oranga Tamariki support all our homes to have their own complaints system in place in relation to the actions of their own staff and their service, recognising there is a process in place for Oranga Tamariki actions that is our responsibility.

Should no further concerns arise in the next six months, we will consider this recommendation completed.

Response – Kia Puāwai

Tamariki, rangatahi and whānau receiving any Kia Puāwai services have the right to raise a concern or make a complaint regarding their care or treatment. Concerns and complaints may be received directly from rangatahi themselves, or from a third party on behalf of tamariki, rangatahi or other clients, and can be made in oral or written form. All concerns and complaints are taken seriously and managed and responded to promptly in accordance with the complaints process. All kaimahi are required to know, understand, and implement the complaints process.

At Kia Puāwai rangatahi are supported to raise concerns and complaints both verbally and/or in writing. We work hard to resolve these matters at the appropriate response level using Kia Puāwai processes for concern and complaint resolution. We would reserve using an external process for those rare circumstances where the nature of the complaint would indicate a need to involve an independent body.

For Lighthouse referrals, all rangatahi receive a copy of the “Lighthouse Home Info and Rangatahi Rights” document at time of admission. This ensures that rangatahi are aware of their right to talk to any adult they feel comfortable with and make a complaint if they feel their rights are not being upheld, or if they think someone has hurt them or made them feel uncomfortable.

Following this recommendation, Kia Puāwai are reviewing the Lighthouse Home Info and Rangatahi Rights document to ensure that ways for Rangatahi to make complaints are more visible.

Recommendation 2

Support community run remand homes to develop a process that will enable independent youth advocates to provide services to mokopuna in the whare.

Response – Oranga Tamariki

Work to establish access to independent youth advocates in provider-run youth justice community remand homes is well underway in most remand homes throughout Aotearoa. VOYCE – Whakarongo Mai provides this service.

VOYCE – Whakarongo Mai (VOYCE) was established in 2017, it is an independent organisation that helps to advocate for children with care experience (children in foster or whānau care) in Aotearoa New Zealand. VOYCE aims to amplify the voices of these children and ensure that they are heard – to positively influence their individual care and to collectively affect change in the wider care system.

Response – Kia Puāwai

Kia Puāwai have a positive and longstanding relationship with VOYCE. All requests by Kaiwhakamana from VOYCE to connect with rangatahi placed in the Lighthouse are supported by our kaimahi through phone calls or in person visits. Rangatahi already engaged with VOYCE prior to coming into placement tend to be more likely to engage in this service, however all rangatahi are able to access their services. Given the short-term nature of length of stay of rangatahi at both Lighthouses, it is often challenging for VOYCE to connect in with all rangatahi admissions. We work hard to find ways to be creative and supportive in this space.

As part of our on-going work with VOYCE we have recently had a hui with the focus on continuing to strengthen our relationship and will continue to work closely with them to explore further opportunities for partnership. We have also requested posters for display in our whare so that rangatahi have the contact information made readily available to them when placed with us. We are in the process of securing pamphlets which will be made available to all rangatahi upon admission.

We both now consider this recommendation completed.

Recommendation 3

Develop a nationwide package of training programmes designed specifically for community run remand homes. Training programmes could include:

- *criminogenic risk factors*
- *mental health needs*
- *intellectual disability*
- *neurodiversity*
- *alcohol and drug support*
- *life skills, and*
- *cultural development/ capacity building.*

Response – Oranga Tamariki

We acknowledge the importance of a nationwide suite of programmes being available to support provider-run youth justice community remand homes. Rangatahi placed in remand homes would benefit from trauma informed programmes that support addressing criminogenic behaviour, alcohol and drug use, while providing further life skills, and cultural development.

Oranga Tamariki is currently undertaking a fundamental and significant shift in our approach, operating model, and practice so we can truly be tamariki and whānau centred. To do this, we have developed a Future Direction Plan² that draws together themes from across *Hipokingia ki te Kahu Aroha Hipokingia ki te Katoa* (the report of the Oranga Tamariki Ministerial Advisory Board) as well as recommendations from previous reviews.

Building on the work of the Future Direction Plan, the Minister for Children asked the Ministerial Advisory Board to review the provision of care in Oranga Tamariki Care and Protection and Youth Justice Residences. The Residences Review³ and the Minister's formal response to the Residences Review⁴ were proactively published on our website on 18 August 2022.

The Future Direction Plan has set a clear direction for the actions required by the organisation over the next several years, and we are progressing this work with urgency. This focuses on developing a workforce strategy that supports high quality social work practice, and the development of a new model of care and operating model that drives locally led, centrally enabled ways of working. Oversight of the progress for this work is being monitored by the Ministerial Advisory Board.

We are pleased that your report identified the professional development opportunities that are offered by Kia Puāwai to their kaimahi.

Oranga Tamariki acknowledges the good work Kia Puāwai are doing.

Response – Kia Puāwai

Our organisational tikanga of aroha, whanaungatanga, manaakitanga and wairuatanga underpin all our policies, procedures, and trainings. At Kia Puāwai we have developed and delivered a range of e-learning, virtual and in person training for kaimahi across our services. This is led by our Tukutuku Team of skilled Practice Advisors who hold significant clinical and cultural expertise. If Oranga Tamariki have training that is specialist in nature and that cannot be met by our internal capability, then we would welcome the opportunity to access those.

Kia Puāwai would support any nation-wide training for community-run remand homes however we would note that Hillsborough is not exclusively a remand home. It is a home that provides unplanned crisis care in times of need which includes both rangatahi on remand and rangatahi under care and protection.

Recommendation 4

² [OT-Future-Direction-Action-Plan.pdf \(orangatamariki.govt.nz\)](#)

³ [Ministerial-Advisory-Boards-Residences-Review.pdf \(orangatamariki.govt.nz\)](#)

⁴ [Formal-Response-to-the-Ministerial-Advisory-Boards-Residences-Review.pdf \(orangatamariki.govt.nz\)](#)

Assess property maintenance requirements and complete repairs and upgrades in a timely manner. Consider how mokopuna can personalise their living space.

Response – Oranga Tamariki

It is important to us, our valued partners and the rangatahi we care for that renovations, repairs and maintenance occur in a timely way. We will work closely with Kia Puāwai to ensure that they are consulted and included in the choices and decisions about colour, design, and décor. The current process with Kia Puāwai includes:

- A designated Property Facilities Manager working closely with the Kia Puāwai Team Leader and their Operational Management kaimahi.
- Home Checks are conducted six-monthly by the Property Facilities Manager to assess the condition of the home and identify any repair and maintenance requirements.
- All maintenance, repairs and health and safety requests are lodged by Kia Puāwai kaimahi through an 0800 number. This is a 24/7 service. Jobs are assessed on a case-by-case basis and response times range from two hours, next day, seven days or long term.
- Kia Puāwai also conduct monthly property checks. Repairs and maintenance issues identified during these checks are lodged.

A recent home check by the Property Facilities Manager identified repairs and maintenance needed at the Hillsborough Lighthouse. Timeframes for delivering the required repairs and maintenance have been agreed in consultation with Kia Puāwai. Coordinating the timing of the contractors and suppliers to complete the repairs and maintenance is important to ensure the least possible disruption to rangatahi living in the whare. Scheduled activities are:

- Windows in most bedrooms and in downstairs lounge/activity room have been damaged with etching/tagging on glass and aluminium joinery. Oranga Tamariki will arrange to replace the glass or the joinery unit by 1 October 2023.
- The carpet is heavily soiled, especially in high traffic areas. It has been cleaned but marks remain on the carpet. Oranga Tamariki will replace the carpet this financial year at a time that will minimise the disruption for rangatahi and community remand capacity.
- There is tagging on bedroom curtains. Oranga Tamariki will arrange to arrange for the installation of new curtains by 17 December 2023.
- Walls in the downstairs lounge and activity room are marked and chipped. Oranga Tamariki will arrange to have the walls repaired and repainted by 17 December 2023.

At the time of the recent home check there were no visible signs of cracking on the ceilings. The Property Facilities Manager will conduct further investigations and arrange for repairs and maintenance as needed.

Oranga Tamariki encourage care providers to allow rangatahi to personalise their bedrooms as this makes a house feel like a home. Options to personal spaces include the use of posters, permanent decals or painting a feature wall with chalk paint in bedrooms. This last option has been popular in other homes. Rangatahi are given chalk and use the space for personal expression. Posters and pictures can be displayed using blue-tack and 3M strips.

Oranga Tamariki will work closely with Kia Puāwai to arrange the repairs and maintenance.

Response – Kia Puāwai

Kia Puāwai are committed to working closely with Oranga Tamariki to ensure maintenance work and/or any refurbishments are progressed in a timely manner. We have an existing relationship with the local Oranga Tamariki Property and Facilities team who we will meet with regularly.

We have spoken with Oranga Tamariki around options to personalise rangatahi living spaces and look forward to implementing some of these ideas. In addition, we appreciate the opportunity to work with

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Oranga Tamariki in relation to the selection of colours, design, and décor, and we would like to discuss some structural and fixture changes to further support the homeliness of the whare.

We will monitor progress against this recommendation for the next six months and will escalate any outstanding actions to the Oranga Tamariki Property and Facilities Manager.

Response to Kia Puāwai Facility Recommendations

Below are the Oranga Tamariki and Kia Puāwai responses to the recommendations made in the Hillsborough Lighthouse OPCAT report.

Recommendation 1

Provide formal supervision and complete professional development plans for kaimahi.

Response – Kia Puāwai

Effective supervision is a formal and ongoing process that promotes safe and effective practice, competent and reliable work practices and regular communication between employees and a senior colleague. Supervision is one way in which Kia Puāwai safeguards practice to ensure that the interests of te tamaiti are paramount and that all tamariki, rangatahi and whānau in our services receive the best possible care and treatment.

The funding structure for the Hillsborough Lighthouse has created some issues that prevented supervision to be delivered at the level we desire. Following negotiations during the 2022/23, the funding rate was increased by 3.1 percent, agreed to be with effect from 1 July 2022. There is also commitment to include a CPI increase of 1.15 percent (against an actual CPI of 6.7%) and the Mental Health and Addictions Pay Equity settlement.

Following agreement of this additional funding to support delivery of supervision, coaching and feedback for our kaimahi, we are currently in the process of recruiting a permanent Practice Leader role for the Hillsborough Lighthouse. This will ensure there is a dedicated leadership role within the home to provide regular and consistent supervision to all kaimahi.

We currently have a range of quality training provided to all kaimahi at Kia Puāwai. For our residential kaimahi this year we have completed MAYBO: Positive Interactions refreshers, *Nga Heke o te Mahau* cultural safety training and noho marae with a focus on embedding indigenous knowledge and practices with our current models of care. Other clinical training planned for this year includes Managing Risk & Incident Reporting, Management of Deliberate Self-Harm, Introduction to LGBTQIA+, and intervention model training which focuses on trauma responses, behaviour escalation, enhancing engagement and teaching techniques. We do intend to provide further training but are awaiting the funding uplift so we can fund this accordingly.

Kia Puāwai will also be commencing our annual Te Waharoa planning shortly for the 2023/24 financial year. Te Waharoa is the organisations performance and professional development planning for all kaimahi in the organisation. All permanent kaimahi at the Lighthouse meet individually with their People Leader to begin planning for the coming year (coinciding with *Matariki*, the Māori new year). This process allows us to structure our kaimahi development over the next 12 months to ensure we are supporting them to increase their knowledge and enhance their practice over time.

Recommendation 2

Support whānau to visit mokopuna in the whare.

Response – Oranga Tamariki

Oranga Tamariki work closely with Kia Puāwai to ensure that our kaimahi support and facilitate regular contact between rangatahi and their whānau. We acknowledge how important it is to maintain and strengthen these relationships. Our current practice is to arrange contact away from the Lighthouse. This is to ensure that privacy is respected, dynamics are managed, and rangatahi are kept safe. Oranga Tamariki support the intention to review this decision and will work with Kia Puāwai to progress this recommendation.

Response – Kia Puāwai

Kia Puāwai respect the responsibilities and rights of the parents and extended whānau of tamariki and rangatahi in our care. Where safe to do so, and approved by Oranga Tamariki, rangatahi are supported and encouraged to maintain meaningful relationships and regular contact with those people who are significant to them.

The Lighthouses were initially setup in response to the evolving youth gang issue that Auckland was experiencing. At the time there was a desire to keep the location of homes confidential due to the risk of youth and adult gang members arriving unannounced to these homes (and in the past this has occurred). We would agree it is timely to revisit this earlier decision and we will explore potential modifications so that rangatahi are able to visit whānau, including by virtual means particularly for those from out of region. We would always however, need to balance this with our staffing ratio to ensure the safety of the other rangatahi in the home and that of our kaimahi.

Current practice in both Lighthouses is that Kia Puāwai works closely with Oranga Tamariki to ensure rangatahi in our care have regular contact with their whānau. A contact list for whānau is requested at the referral stage prior to rangatahi transitioning into the Lighthouse, or followed up at the earliest convenience when it is not immediately available (e.g., after hours admissions). Calls to whānau are daily, with some allowance to call multiple whānau members (i.e., back-to-back phone calls) when needed.

Kanohi ki te kanohi visits are arranged for rangatahi with site Social Workers. Rangatahi make these requests either to our residential kaimahi who then liaise with site, or directly with the Social Workers. Visits are normally held at Oranga Tamariki sites, or any other place agreed upon with whānau. Having whānau visits take place outside of the whare has ensured that rangatahi are still supported to strengthen their relationships with whānau, and that the privacy and safety of other rangatahi in the home is maintained.

Recommendation 3

Consider an increase to operational funding for the whare that reflects the increases to costs of living.

Response – Oranga Tamariki

Oranga Tamariki have agreed to an increase for the placement rate in recognition of the value of the services provided by Kia Puāwai, and to respond to the increase in resourcing costs. We acknowledge the delay in providing the 2022/23 and 2023/24 financial year contracts that has resulted in additional funding not yet being available to Kia Puāwai. We are continuing to work with Kia Puāwai to urgently resolve this and expect to have it completed by September 2023.

Response – Kia Puāwai

We are pleased that Oranga Tamariki are committed to resolving the outstanding contract matters for 2022/23 and 2023/24 financial year.

We are surprised by the comment describing the budget being tight to offer a variety of nutritionally balanced food. During 2023 our residential homes rolled out initiatives with a strong focus on healthy food and eating in the homes. For example, we worked on reducing food wastage, as well as the frequency of takeaway meals during the week in favour of fresh produce and home cooked meals. We have not had restrictions in place on the food (household grocery) budget and would make any necessary adjustments to ensure all rangatahi in our care have access to nutritionally balanced food. It is however pleasing that rangatahi experience around food has been positive, including being able to prepare meals for themselves.