



28 July 2023

Judge Frances Eivers
Chief Children's Commissioner
Mana Mokopuna | Children and Young People's Commission
Sent via email: C.Burrage@manamokopuna.org.nz

Tēnā koe Judge Eivers

Draft OPCAT Report – Hillsborough Lighthouse

In April 2023, your monitoring team visited the Hillsborough Lighthouse to monitor the safety and wellbeing of tamariki and rangatahi. This monitoring visit was completed as part of your role as a National Preventive Mechanism under the Optional Protocol to the Convention Against Torture and Other Cruel, Inhuman or Degrading Treatment or Punishment (OPCAT).

On 3 July 2023, you provided your draft OPCAT report for the Hillsborough Lighthouse to Oranga Tamariki—Ministry for Children (Oranga Tamariki) and this was then shared with our partner agency Kia Puāwai for joint review and comment. Our response to the factual accuracy was shared with you on 18 July 2023.

Oranga Tamariki—Ministry for Children (Oranga Tamariki) and Kia Puāwai have accepted all recommendations. Please find enclosed our response to the recommendations following your visit. Our response has been jointly authored by Kia Puāwai and Oranga Tamariki.

Your positive findings and the evidence of the quality of care being provided by Kia Puāwai was pleasing to note. The positive relationships, access to a range of activities internally and off-site, and the recognition of the strong relationships between the Oranga Tamariki social workers and the Kia Puāwai kaimahi are valued insights and demonstrate the type of engagement we would want to see occurring across all of our care settings.

Kia Puāwai and Oranga Tamariki are proud of the work we do together to ensure that rangatahi experience significant quality engagement with their whānau. Whilst restriction about whānau visiting the whare is to ensure that the safety, welfare, and privacy of everyone at the whare is protected and respected, we recognise the significance of rangatahi maintaining connection with their whānau. We will work together to look at ways that the whānau could safely visit the whare alongside any other opportunities to increase this connection in other ways.

IN-CONFIDENCE

The level of funding provided to Kia Puāwai was jointly reviewed earlier this year and an increase in operational funding was agreed to support daily operating costs, transitioning to the Teaching Family Model of practice, implementation of the National Care Standards, Remand Home requirements, and providing additional funding to ensure pay equity for kaimahi. Oranga Tamariki acknowledge the delay has been challenging. We are continuing to work together to finalise the contract variation and the funding with an expectation this work will be completed by September 2023.

We acknowledge the areas in your report that require further work to progress. We are particularly concerned about the matters you raised regarding young people not having access to independent advocacy at the Lighthouse. We would like to reassure you that we do in fact have strong relationships with VOYCE - Whakarongo Mai and they are regular visitors to the Lighthouse whare.

There are several property improvements scheduled over the coming months. We have asked that the property team specifically consider the matters that your team identified during their visit. We regret the impression that Oranga Tamariki are viewed as a 'landlord' and this does not reflect our genuine intention to support the provision of a physical environment that matches the nurturing environment that the team at the home provide.

I trust you find this information useful. If you have any questions or would like further information, please feel free to contact me on 029 200 5086, or the Kia Puāwai Chief Executive Marion Heeney on 029 917 5379, or alternatively Julie Miller, General Manager Monitoring and External Relationships on 027 257 2492.

Nāku noa, nā



Nicolette Dickson
Deputy Chief Executive
Quality Practice & Experiences



Marion Heeney
Tumu Whakarae
Chief Executive | Kia Puāwai