# Child, Youth and Family Residential Care Regulations Inspection Report: 2013

## Whakatakapokai Residence

Whakatakapokai is a care and protection residence located in Auckland which provides 24-hour safe and secure care for up to 20 children and young people aged from 10–16 years.

Staff at the residence aim to provide children and young people with the best possible opportunities to improve their life outcomes and realise their potential. To help achieve this, Child, Youth and Family provides:

* a safe, structured environment which maximises learning opportunities
* evidence-based programmes to stabilise and address behaviour
* assessments which inform our planning and interventions to meet the individual needs of each child and young person
* practice and relationships that are informed by the values, beliefs and protocols of family and whānau
* interventions that engage children and young people in a supportive constructive process of change
* a comprehensive plan to transition children and young people successfully back into education, training or employment opportunities and to permanent and stable care.

Over 55 full-time permanent staff work at Whakatakapokai, which is one of four care and protection residences run by Child, Youth and Family operating within New Zealand. The other three are Puketai in Dunedin, Te Oranga in Christchurch and Epuni in Wellington.

### Background

Child, Youth and Family provides residential care for a number of children and young people under section 364 of the Children, Young Persons, and Their Families Act 1989.

Staff provide 24-hour care and custody for some of the most challenging and vulnerable children and young people who are admitted when there is a concern for their safety or if their continued behaviour in the community is putting themselves or other people around them at significant risk.

### Inspection Reports

Each residence is assessed every calendar year by the Office of the Chief Social Worker to ensure:

* compliance with the regulations as specified in the Children, Young Persons, and Their Families (Residential Care) Regulations 1996 (the Regulations)
* compliance with section 384 of the Children, Young Persons, and Their Families Act 1989
* the provision of safe, appropriate care for children and young people.

A report is produced summarising the findings of the inspection that focuses on any non-compliance identified, and residences are required to develop a response to the report that addresses these areas for improvement.

## Inspection summary as at December 2013

### Scope

The residential care regulations are about the safety and wellbeing, and upholding of the rights of, children and young people placed in a Child, Youth and Family residence. They also outline expectations about management and inspection of the residences.

Each inspection covers the six parts of the regulations, namely:

* Part 1: Rights of children and young persons in residences
* Part 2: Limitations on powers of punishment and discipline
* Part 3: Management and inspection of residences
* Part 4: Searches
* Part 5: Secure care
* Part 6: Records.

In 2013 Whakatakapokai achieved a 93.4 percent rate of compliance across the six parts of the regulations, for those provisions tested on the inspection.

### Overall

* Not all provisions of the residential care regulations and section 384 of the Children, Young Persons, and Their Families Act 1989 apply to every residence, on every occasion.
* Due to the nature of some regulations, non-compliance in one area can mean automatic non-compliance with other regulations as they are inherently linked.
* The inspection identified areas of strength as well as areas for improvement for Whakatakapokai.
* An improvement plan was developed to address the identified areas of improvement and the result of this plan is outlined below.

### Areas of strength

Areas where the inspection found evidence of good practices and processes that were promoting the wellbeing and safety of children and young people included:

* the continued provision of a useful information pack for young people at the point of admission into the residence
* an effective clinical practice framework
* the individual care planning process
* effective staff management, including the delivery of external supervision to support professional development and the provision of ‘quick reference’ tools to support enhanced staff knowledge of the regulations
* a well-managed grievance process
* an excellent standard of nutrition
* a well maintained admissions register
* an engaged community liaison committee.

### Areas for improvement

Areas where improvement was required included:

* increasing the participation of young people in education and training
* ensuring consents for medication examinations and treatment were obtained and clearly documented
* ensuring that approaches taken to managing children and young people’s challenging behaviour involved no more than the minimum amount of physical intervention necessary, and that the full range of options for managing this behaviour were utilised
* enhancing the training available to support staff in the management of young people with mental health diagnoses and demonstrating challenging behaviour
* the management of secure care processes, including ensuring grounds existed for the confinement of young people to their rooms in the unit
* the detail of recording in the daily log and secure care register
* further strengthening the compliance monitoring process.

### Service delivery response

In response to the identified areas for improvement, Child, Youth and Family has taken the following actions at Whakatakapokai:

* the curriculum plan for young people in the residence has been submitted to the Ministry of Education, and a protocols and procedures document between the residence and the education provider has been completed
* a consent form template for medical examinations has been implemented for completion before new admissions come into the residence
* training for all staff has been undertaken on the use and recording of physical interventions, including the circumstances of their use in managing young people’s challenging behaviour. Transfer of learning from this training has been overseen by team leaders, with coaching and mentoring by senior staff
* the residence’s clinical team leader has both delivered and sourced externally specialised training for staff on caring for and managing mental health concerns and challenging behaviour in young people
* staff training has been delivered on the required processes around the confinement of young people to their rooms in the secure care unit, and senior staff approval is now required for all room confinements
* work has also commenced to ensure staff working in the secure care unit are aware of the recording requirements, and internal audit processes have been implemented within the residence to support improved compliance in this area
* a fortnightly working group has been established to oversee areas of the regulations and ensure regular and timely updates on compliance are provided to the manager.