# Child, Youth and Family Residential Care Regulations Inspection Report: 2012

## Epuni Residence

Epuni is a care and protection residence located in Wellington 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.

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

### 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 October 2012

### 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 2012 Epuni achieved a 91.45 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 Epuni.
* 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:

* individual care plans completed in a timely manner and in consultation with children, young people and their family and whānau
* medical examinations completed within the required seven-day timeframe
* significant improvement in the recording of confinements and reviews of children and young people in secure care
* a well-managed grievance process
* records maintained to a very high standard, in particular admissions and complaints registers
* well managed searches.

### Areas for improvement

Areas where improvement was required included:

* ensuring sufficient detail in children and young people’s care plans to meet their needs
* clear guidelines surrounding the use of the intensive support area to ensure that children and young people still received their full entitlement to education, activities, and opportunities to socialise with other young people
* improving the recording, storage and administration of medication, and the provision of timely medical information to health providers
* 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
* ensuring seconded staff had access to effective support and training, and that roles and responsibilities between staff were always clear
* ensuring children and young people’s property, in particular their clothing, was safeguarded from other children and young people
* completing quarterly evacuation exercises
* ensuring that when children and young people were in secure care, there was effective and timely review and recording of the grounds for their continuing placement and they received a full range of educational and other activities
* 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 Epuni:

* case leaders have been given responsibility for ensuring that the correct detail is included in care plans, with a monitoring process implemented for the first three months to ensure the change is effectively embedded
* developed and implemented clear and succinct guidelines for the use of the intensive support area
* provided refresher training for staff on medication practices
* scheduled and documented ongoing training for all staff in non-violent crisis intervention, with six-monthly refresher training following a staff member’s first 12 months of employment
* implemented a peer-support process for seconded staff, with ongoing discussion and monitoring by the residence’s leadership team
* enhanced the process for managing young people’s laundry to help ensure the safeguarding of clothing from other young people
* contracted a fire safety provider to oversee quarterly evacuation exercises
* reviewed and increased the range of activities available to young people when in secure care, implemented staff training on daily review processes, and formalised staff accountability and oversight of the secure care unit on each shift
* ensured regular monitoring of regulations compliance and implemented regulations training for care teams.