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

## Te Au rere a te Tonga Residence

Te Au rere a te Tonga is a youth justice residence located in Palmerston North which provides safe and secure care for up to 30 young people aged from 14–17 years.

The Turitea unit enables up to six young people at any one time to further develop their independent living skills.

Staff at the residence aim to provide young people with the best possible opportunities to turn their lives around. 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 including programmes focused on reducing re-offending
* assessments which inform our planning and interventions to meet the individual needs of each child and young person
* 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 90 full-time permanent staff work at Te Au rere a te Tonga and the residence is one of four youth justice residences operating in New Zealand. The other three are Korowai Manaaki in Auckland, Te Maioha o Parekarangi in Rotorua and Te Puna Wai ō Tuhinapo in Christchurch.

### 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.

The majority of children and young people who commit offences are effectively dealt with in the community by the youth justice system. Youth justice residences provide services for children and young people whose offending behaviour is such that they pose a significant risk to themselves or others.

### 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 May 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 Te Au rere a te Tonga achieved a 93.1 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 Te Au rere a te Tonga.
* An improvement plan was developed to address the 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 young people included:

* a senior management team that provided leadership and clear direction to staff
* involvement of family and whānau in care planning
* detailed procedures outlined in the security management plan
* an appropriate and sensitive search process
* a pro-social sporting programme which was making a positive contribution to the experience of young people in the residence.

### Areas for improvement

Areas where improvement was required included:

* ensuring that staff received complete health information in a timely manner, to enable young people’s health needs to be appropriately reflected in their individual care plans
* improving the monitoring of medication administration recording to ensure any errors were promptly addressed
* ensuring all staff understood the role of the grievance process and assisted young people to resolve their grievances through the formal process, rather than attempting to resolve them informally
* ensuring that secure care was only used where appropriate grounds for admission existed and not as a punishment or sanction, for example for causing property damage or possessing unauthorised items
* ensuring only approved punishments and sanctions were applied in the management of children and young people’s challenging behaviour
* ensuring that all restraints involved the application of approved techniques only
* ensuring that all staff at all times provided high standards of professional care, that young people’s right to confidentiality was maintained, and that all children and young people felt safe and secure
* improving the process for safeguarding young people’s property at the residence, particularly their clothing when they were in secure care
* ensuring that staff understood the regulations, and 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 Te Au rere a te Tonga:

* ensured care staff receive regular supervision and mentoring
* implemented an action plan with the health provider to ensure complete health information is available in a timely manner, including the re-introduction of a health coordinator position to support effective information management and flow
* strengthened the responsibilities of key managers in the monitoring of medication administration, including fortnightly compliance meetings with the District Health Board and contracted health provider
* introduced a requirement for the review of all secure care admissions by team leaders and managers
* implemented a process to monitor the recording of any sanctions imposed to manage challenging behaviour
* agreed that the residence manager will review CCTV recording of all restraints, and that ongoing refresher training on non-violent crisis intervention be completed at team training days
* agreed that refresher training on matters relating to professional standards of care would be undertaken at team training days, to further support and enhance consistency in staff practice, management of young people’s confidentiality, and safeguarding of young people’s personal property
* ensured all staff and managers received refresher training on the grievance procedures
* agreed that any withdrawn grievance which relates to staff behaviour will be investigated by a member of the senior management team
* involved a representative from the education provider in the development of young people’s transition plans
* developed and implemented a monitoring framework to support regulations compliance.