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

## 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 August 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 Whakatakapokai achieved a 92.08 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:

* individual care plans completed to a high standard and in a timely manner
* a well-managed grievance process
* the provision of a useful information pack for young people at the point of admission
* young people’s personal files being organised and well documented
* excellent standard of nutrition
* well-maintained admissions register
* an engaged community liaison committee.

### Areas for improvement

Areas where improvement was required included:

* increasing the involvement of family and whānau in care planning
* the recording, storage and administration of medication
* 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
* that the residence ensured an environment in which all children and young people at all times felt safe, secure and not threatened by any form of abuse or harassment, in particular from other children and young people
* training to support staff in the management of young people with mental health diagnoses and demonstrating challenging behaviour
* the management of secure care processes including access to a range of programmes and activities
* clarity of roles and responsibilities between staff
* the detail of recording within the daily log
* further enhancements to the compliance monitoring process.

### Service delivery response

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

* implemented a system which monitors the involvement of family and whānau in care planning and ensures that any gaps in such involvement are responded to swiftly
* provided refresher training for staff on medication practices, enhanced medication storage facilities, and implemented a regular medication auditing process
* appointed a further two instructors in non-violent crisis intervention responsible for training, observation and staff debriefing, and introduced monitoring to support ongoing oversight of this process
* training for all staff regarding mental health issues has been provided by the Child and Adolescent Mental Health Service (CAMHS), with daily clinical briefings set up to identify risks
* established regular meeting forums to support enhanced clarity of roles and responsibilities across residence teams and staff
* provided refresher training for all staff on secure care management practices including daily and management reviews, the provision of varied activities, and confinements of young people to their rooms – all room confinements now require duty manager approval
* provided refresher training for all staff on recording practices, implemented an improved communication system for information relating to children and young people, and implemented a daily monitoring process.