# Child, Youth and Family Residential Care Regulations Inspection Report: 2014

## Te Au rere a te Tonga[[1]](#footnote-1) 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 March 2014

### 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 2014 Te Au rere a te Tonga achieved 99.6 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.

### Areas of strength

Areas where we found evidence of good practices and processes that are promoting the well-being and safety of young people were:

* A senior management team that provides leadership and clear direction to staff;
* Involvement of families and whanau in care planning and delivery;
* Vocational opportunities for young people including working on projects with the Department of Conservation;
* The contribution of education services in the case management of young people;
* The management of young people in secure care that ensures they spend the least amount of time possible in the unit;
* An effective compliance monitoring programme and a commitment by senior management to the development of staff skills in this area;
* A behaviour management system that is effective in encouraging young people to behave in a positive manner.

### Areas for improvement

The area where improvement was required included:

* Differing views on information sharing between health service staff and residential staff have impacted on the effectiveness of the multi-agency approach to case management and the operational care of young people.

### Service delivery response

Since the inspection, the Mid Central Health PHO has arranged for a different provider to provide health services at the residence.

Since this has occurred, significant progress has been made in re-building relationships between health and residential services. Clear expectations and understanding now exists between both residence and health staff regarding the sharing of information, and the expectation that both services will contribute to the multi-agency approach to case management and care of young people.

1. Prior to November 2012 was known as Lower North Youth

   Justice Residence [↑](#footnote-ref-1)