

5 March 2026

Minister Karen Chhour and Minister Upston
Private Bag 18041
Parliament Buildings
Wellington 6160
By email

Note: *this letter has been updated from Barnardos earlier letter dated 3 February 2026 – specifically to respond to the requirements of Section 30 Oversight of Oranga Tamariki system Act 2022.*

Tēnā kōrua Minister Chhour me Minister Upston

Barnardos Aotearoa welcomes the Annual Report of Aroturuki Tamariki – *Experiences in care in Aotearoa*, covering the period of 1 July 2024 – 30 June 2025, and the opportunity to provide comment on its findings.

We continue to value the positive and constructive engagement we have with Aroturuki Tamariki, and the insights gained from their oversight of agency compliance with the National Care Standards and Related Matters Regulations.

We have reviewed the draft sections of the report relating specifically to our organisation, and while we acknowledge the continued small number of rangatahi in our care, it is encouraging to see their experiences reflected and Barnardos' ongoing compliance with the National Care Standards confirmed.

Specifically in relation to Section 30 of the Oversight of Oranga Tamariki system Act 2022:

- Although no specific actions are required of Barnardos arising from this year's report, we remain committed to continuous improvement, best practice, and ensuring that the voices of tamariki, rangatahi, and whānau guide and shape our services. Barnardos continues to actively learn from and respond to the recommendations set out in *Whanaketia: Through pain and trauma, from darkness to light: The final report of the Royal Commission of Inquiry into Historical Abuse in State Care and in the Care of Faith-based Institutions*.
- Recognising the complexity and interconnectedness of the recommendations, our implementation plan is structured across nine work programmes that collectively weave through multiple areas of improvement. The timeframes and delivery of these work programmes depend on a range of variables, and progress is monitored through quarterly reporting to the Barnardos Board.
- This work is embedded within our well-established quality assurance system, where we integrate both qualitative and quantitative methods to ensure our outcomes are robust, meaningful, and grounded in the lived experiences of those we support.



We also wish to acknowledge the report's continued and consistent findings that significant improvements across the wider system remain necessary and urgent.

As a leading children's charity, Barnardos reiterates its commitment to working alongside Oranga Tamariki, and other government and community agencies to achieve further improvements across the sector.

Barnardos is here to help. We have two specific projects we believe can do that:

- **Te Korowai Rangatahi** is Barnardos Aotearoa's proposal to change a fragmented system failing tamariki. It is a fully integrated, trauma-informed care continuum that spans prevention, care, and post-care - delivered by one trusted partner, Barnardos, with strong whānau engagement at its heart.

This model targets support to the young people who need it most, at the right time, in the right way - reducing future harm and delivering lasting public value. It aligns with the Government's commitment to early intervention, better life outcomes, and smarter investment in the future of our country.

- **A Generational Plan for Children** is Barnardos' proposed long-term solution to building an Aotearoa New Zealand our children deserve. We believe only a long-term, cross-party and cross-sector approach that puts children at the centre and commits to change that lasts beyond election cycles will truly shift the dial for children.

We must all work together to make the urgent improvements our children and their families need and we believe these proposals can be powerful solutions.

We welcome the opportunity to discuss these further with you and how we can strengthen our mahi working with all those across the children's sector to enhance lifelong outcomes and wellbeing. As a beacon of hope and of Kotahitanga, in a sector that needs more of it, Barnardos Aotearoa was proud to lean on the generosity of philanthropy, business, trusts, private wealth and volunteers to build a Whare outside the wire of our therapeutic service, Te Poutama Arahi Rangatahi. The Government can't do it alone. The Whare will be a safe space to support rangatahi healing, a place to welcome them and their whānau, for whānau to stay overnight as and when needed, as well as to support the wellbeing and development of staff.





Our commitment to working in partnership with tamariki and their whānau to provide the right care and support is absolute.

Kotahitanga.

Ngā mihi nui

Matt Reid
Chief Executive Officer
Barnardos Aotearoa

