

Agency updates and factual inaccuracies in response to ‘Towards a stronger safety net to prevent abuse of children’

On behalf of the agencies involved, please find below a collated view of comments on factual accuracy, as well as individual agency updates.

Factual Accuracy Commentary

Comment	Commentary
<p>Recommendations 8 and 9 – Ministry of Education</p> <p>Page 80: <i>'While a higher number of reports of concern from ECE services are being progressed for further action by Oranga Tamariki than in previous years, the proportion of reports of concern where further action is taken has not changed. It is unclear whether this is because there has been no change in the understanding of when to make a report of concern, despite the training, or if it is because of Oranga Tamariki resourcing and decision making'</i></p>	<p>While the number of Reports of Concern has gone up, the number of cases where Oranga Tamariki has taken further action has also increased accordingly and not deviated. It seems that there would be more of a concern if reports increased significantly and the number of cases requiring further action had remained the same.</p>
<p>Recommendation 10 – Ministry of Education</p> <p>Page 85: <i>'The Ministry of Education consulted with the ECE sector on the proposed amendments in June and July 2025, with the changes progressing through the introduction of the Education and Training (Early Childhood Education Reform) Amendment Bill in July 2025. The revised licensing criteria were gazetted on 28 November 2025 and are expected to be implemented in April 2026. This lead-in time gives the ECE sector and the Ministry of Education time to prepare and train kaimahi on the changes.'</i></p>	<p>The last paragraph on page 85 is incorrect. We'd like the below correction on the record:</p> <p>The Ministry of Education consulted with the ECE sector on the proposed amendments in June and July 2025, and revised licensing criteria were gazetted on 28 November 2025. These changes will take effect on 20 April 2026, giving the ECE sector, the Ministry of Education and ERO time to prepare and train kaimahi on the changes, with further guidance available in January 2026.</p>

Agency Specific Commentary and Updates

Agency	Update
Department of Corrections	<p>Staff Training</p> <p>Corrections have developed whole of organisation Child Protection Policy awareness training, which is scheduled for completion in February 2026. The training will then be rolled out to staff. This training module has been designed in two parts; the first being an interactive online module and the second scenario-based designed to be led by leaders with their teams. The online module is centred around the message "<i>If you see or hear something, do something</i>" and walks staff through: Types of abuse; Physical and behavioural observations that could indicate the possibility of harm; Role of Oranga Tamariki and the New Zealand Police; What actions to take if you suspect harm is occurring; What information you can share with Oranga Tamariki, and where to access support and get additional guidance.</p> <p>Immediate Needs Assessment</p> <p>On 31 January 2026, Corrections updated its Immediate Needs Assessment for people entering prison. The updated assessment asks if a person is the primary caregiver for any children. If so, Corrections will ask for relevant information about the children and their care arrangements.</p> <p>Parental Support</p> <p>People in prison can access parenting support services via their case manager. This support is designed to help prisoners to learn parenting skills and increase their parenting confidence, getting support to be a parent/ caregiver and communicate with the child while they are in prison and getting support to strengthen their relationship with the child after release.</p> <p>Progressing work against recommendations from the Office of the Inspectorate</p> <p>Alongside work to respond to Dame Karen's recommendations, Corrections are progressing the response to recommendations in Corrections' operationally independent Office of the Inspectorate's report on the management of the child's mother. There are two progress updates to share in response to the Monitor's observations in Appendix B of the report:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • For Recommendation 2, about Corrections induction process, Corrections agrees that this was not achieved at the time when the report was finalised. However, Corrections considers that its response to this recommendation is now complete, as Corrections has updated the Immediate Needs Assessment for people entering prison. • For Recommendation 5, about the Report of Concern process, Corrections agrees the update on work being undertaken is accurate. However, our timeline has been extended, and we now expect to complete this work in February 2026.
The Centre for Family Violence and Sexual Violence Prevention	<p>"Lack of a consistent operating model or approach to assessing risks for either reports of concern tables or family violence tables"</p> <p>As noted in page 50 of the report, the Centre agrees that this is a known issue and has been responding to it through the development and implementation of the Family Violence multi-agency response (FV MARs) target operating model</p>

	<p>(approved by the IEB last year). A High-Risk Protocol and Information Sharing Protocol has also been developed to increase consistency in the quality of multi-agency responses.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Implementation of the FV MARs Target Operating Model will strengthen multi-agency responses by establishing consistent processes, functions and outcomes expectations across the country, while enabling local innovation to reflect community strengths and realities. The target operating model has six evidence-based core components that outline WHAT is required for an effective multi-agency response. Six critical steps then outline HOW the response will be delivered in the future. • The High-Risk Protocol will guide practitioners in their work with people at the highest risk of severe family violence and will be supported by resources and training. It will be implemented and refined based on insights from its use in Hawke’s Bay, Tairāwhiti, Rotorua, and Auckland City. • The Information Sharing Protocol will build on existing protocols in localities, guidelines and guidance from the Office of the Privacy Commissioner (OPC). Safe, consistent and compliant information sharing protocols are a critical enabler for effective multi-agency responses and an integral component of the High-Risk Protocol.
<p>Health NZ</p>	<p><i>Medical Records</i></p> <p>Health NZ are undertaking a multi-year programme to link medical records across relevant healthcare settings to enable health professionals to view a picture of a child’s medical history. Over the next year, Health NZ will progressively deliver integrated access to hospital and primary care records through existing systems, connected nationally. The South Island already has record-sharing between general practice and hospital providers, and this functionality is currently being deployed in some parts of the lower North Island. Health NZ plan to deliver major milestones to progress this recommendation in 2026. The focus up until March 2026 is to complete the rollout of HealthOne to Primary Health Organisations (PHOs) in the lower North Island that are part of the current tranche. Health NZ will track and report against the deployment of HealthOne into the North Island which will expand access to primary care health records, and the use of the Shared Digital Health Record (SDHR) data service which will ensure accessibility to core health record data nationally.</p> <p><i>CP Protocol (CPP)</i></p> <p>Health NZ has joined the CPP in a training and governance capacity while further work is undertaken to assess resourcing requirements of participating fully. Health NZ is however continuing to respond to referrals as required while this work is being undertaken.</p> <p>Work is underway as part of phase two – assessing resourcing needs for full formal participation. Additional or dedicated regional resource will be required to join fully. Health NZ is already contributing to managing referrals resulting from the protocol, despite not being a formal partner to the document. As stated in the second review, Health NZ may be in a position to proceed to full partnership in July 2026, subject to the outcomes of the scoping exercise and resourcing requirements.</p>
<p>Ministry of Education</p>	<p><i>Introduction (comments in response to references made to Ministry of Education)</i></p> <p>The Ministry has yet to establish a formal agency review role for non-accidental child mortality reviews. This process may be in scope for review once mandatory reporting of child abuse is introduced.</p>

Recommendation 7 (on Roundtables and information sharing)

Information sharing

The Ministry of Education continues to offer information sharing training to schools, Early Childhood Education services and internal kaimahi on request on a limited basis.

Roundtables

The Ministry supports responses to family harm in a range of ways, including through participation at multi-agency tables. Participation is determined by regional directors and considers resources and capacity. Work to build a unified understanding of ways to share information, and its associated legislation, is underway for agencies. More complexity exists where NGOs are present on roundtable. The mandatory training module that is being tested includes general advice on information sharing.

The work to establish Attendance Multi Agency Meetings will provide a model of how effective information sharing in this type of setting can be utilized to support children. As a part of this work, the Ministry has developed a template for sharing information protocols at the multi-agency forums which outlines relevant legislation for sharing information, and guidance on the scope for information sharing between agencies. During the pilot phase, the Ministry will collect detailed information about the demand for these forums, and the resources required to operate them effectively.

Recommendation 10

The implementation of ECE licensing changes is still tracking to commence April 2026. More guidance was provided to early learning services in January 2026 to help them prepare for the April changes. Additional resources, including a templated child protection policy and scenarios to test services' policy against, has been updated in the Ministry's Children's Act guide for ECE and schools. Pending introduction of mandatory training and reporting across the children's system, the Ministry of Education will continue to promote eLearning digital resources to early learning services to help build awareness and confidence in recognising, responding to and reporting on suspected child abuse and neglect.

The Education and Training Amendment Act 2025, which passed in November 2025, has also established a statutory Director of Regulation role in the Ministry of Education. This amendment specifies the key regulatory functions the Director must perform including undertaking proactive, regular risk-based monitoring and enforcement of compliance. This will further strengthen active monitoring of the implementation of child protection policies by early learning services, as their compliance with other ECE regulatory requirements protecting the health, safety, and wellbeing of children.

Agency recommendations 1 and 2

Recommendation one is complete (as noted in embargoed report).

Recommendation two has been superseded by the Ministry of Regulation's review of the ECE sector which was announced in April 2025.

Ministry of Justice	<p>While the Ministry of Justice was not one of the original commissioning agencies, the reports from Aroturuki Tamariki include recommendations that affect the administration of the courts, policy settings in legislation administered by the Ministry of Justice, and its broader duties and responsibilities. This includes the Ministry's role to support judges to conduct the business of the courts.</p> <p><i>Making Children Visible in the Court Process</i></p> <p>Page 34 of the report refers to the judicially led cross-agency work <i>Making Children Visible in the Court Process</i>, which was introduced to help ensure judges receive information about dependent tamariki and rangatahi of defendants, who are facing charges that carry penalties of imprisonment.</p> <p>The Ministry continues to support the judiciary to raise visibility of dependent tamariki and rangatahi within the court system when the primary caregiver is in custody and/or may receive a custodial sentence.</p> <p>To help further embed this process, the Ministry is exploring the development of resources for all Public Defence Service lawyers to encourage better understanding of the importance and use of it. If this proves successful, the Ministry will explore expanding it to other audiences, including other defence lawyers.</p> <p><i>Understanding the number of sole parents or caregivers coming before the courts</i></p> <p>The report notes the importance of improving visibility of the number of sole parents or caregivers coming before the courts on page 32.</p> <p>To support future reporting, the Ministry is working with the judiciary to explore changes to the courts' case management system to record information about the existence of defendants' dependent children, when it is provided to the court through the judiciaries.</p> <p><i>Making Children Visible in the Court Process</i></p> <p>In parallel, the Ministry is again in consultation with the judiciary, exploring a process and system improvement that would enable New Zealand Police to automatically provide the court, at the initial charging stage, with information on whether a defendant has dependent children. The process would only apply to charges that carry a potential penalty of imprisonment, and the information would be limited to the number and ages of any dependent children.</p> <p>Because both changes require updates to the courts' case management system, they will be progressed subject to internal funding and in agreement with the judiciary.</p>
All - Interagency Hub	<p>Please note since the implementation of the hub, agencies confirmed to be represented in the hub include Oranga Tamariki, NZ Police, Department of Corrections and the Ministries of Education, Health, and Social Development.</p>