



Briefing Note: Meeting with Minister for Children regarding the Ministry's implementation of the Oranga Tamariki Action Plan

To:	Hon Jan Tinetti, Minister of Education		
Date:	28.04.2023	Priority:	High (for a meeting on 2 May)
Security Level:	In Confidence	METIS No:	1309068
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Messaging seen by Communications team:	No	Round Robin:	No

Purpose of Paper

The purpose of this paper is to support your meeting with the Minister for Children, on Tuesday 2 May from 4.30 - 5pm. Following the last CYWS Ministers Meeting on 6 April, you and Minister Davis discussed a meeting to follow up on Education matters arising from the Oranga Tamariki Action Plan (OTAP).

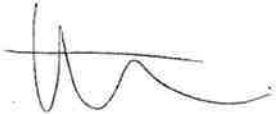
Summary

1. The Ministry of Education is undertaking a significant work programme under the OTAP. This includes actions under the OTAP Implementation Plan which comprises Education Needs Assessments. These Education Needs Assessments require a response which adds additional actions required by the Ministry.
2. This paper will address the status of the Ministry's responsibilities in the OTAP Implementation Plan. It also emphasises the importance of foundational activities such as information sharing and understanding the population this work impacts to enable this work to occur.
3. There is an opportunity to leverage existing education work streams to ensure the population of children and young people that are the focus of the OTAP are considered. In order to achieve maximum impact for these children and young people and make progress in this space, we recommend focusing on achieving a few high-impact actions and building from there.
4. Andy Jackson, Hautū, Te Pou Kaupapahere | Policy, will attend the meeting with you.

Proactive Release

agree that the Ministry of Education release this briefing once it has been considered by you, with redactions as appropriate.

Agree / Disagree



Anne O'Brien
Senior Policy Manager
Te Pou Kaupapahere

28/04/2023



Hon Jan Tinetti
Minister of Education

21/5/2023

Background

- The OTAP was publicly announced on 8 July 2022 following the adoption of the Child and Youth Wellbeing Strategy (the Strategy) in 2019. The OTAP outlines how children's agency chief executives will work together to improve the wellbeing of children and young people, in accordance with the Strategy.
- The OTAP is driven by:
 - a. an Implementation Plan¹ which sets out 11 overarching actions
 - b. Oranga Tamariki undertaking Needs Assessments, as part of the Implementation Plan, and the responsible agency or agencies producing a Response to the Needs Assessments.

Implementation Plan

- The Ministry of Education's (the Ministry) responsibilities under the Implementation Plan include implementing actions listed in the report from ERO on learning in residential care (the ERO report) and being part of a Gateway Assessment Review, alongside Oranga Tamariki and the Ministry of Health.
- The first six-monthly report back to Cabinet covering the period from July 2022 – December 2022 showed that several of the Ministry's actions had orange or red statuses, indicating that they were partially or significantly delayed. As per recent advice (METIS 1307634 refers), these delays resulted in a reprioritisation of OTAP work and an adjustment of deadlines.
- **Appendix One** sets out the current status of delayed actions.

Education Needs Assessments and Response

- There is a significant action for Oranga Tamariki in the Implementation Plan that has implications for the Ministry. This is undertaking three Needs Assessments which require a response from the agencies involved. These responses are likely to lead to additional work for the Ministry. Three Education Needs Assessments are signalled.
 - a. The first in-depth Education Needs Assessment (concerning the in-care population) was completed at the end of 2022. Social Wellbeing Board considered the Ministry's draft response to the Needs Assessment this month. We will provide you with the final response in May.
 - b. The second Needs Assessment (referred to as the Transitions Needs Assessment) is currently being prepared for discussion among CYWS Ministers.
 - c. A third Needs Assessment (concerning the 'at-risk' population) is due to begin in November 2023. It is highly likely that the results of the second and third Needs Assessments will lead to further actions for the Ministry to respond to.
- Some of the Ministry's actions in the response to the Needs Assessment are contingent on the progress of data-sharing led by OT. The Ministry is not in a position to target services to children and young people in care or youth justice, until the processes for sharing this information are in place.

¹ <https://www.orangatamariki.govt.nz/assets/Uploads/About-us/New-ways-of-working/OTAP/Oranga-Tamariki-Action-Plan-implementation-plan.pdf>

- At the CWYS Ministers meeting on 6 April, Minister Davis highlighted his dissatisfaction with progress that the Ministry was making against the OTAP Implementation Plan.

Issues for discussion with Minister Davis

You may wish to discuss the following matters with Minister Davis, emphasising that a focus on high impact activities is the immediate priority.

- Minister Davis has indicated his preference for a large work programme in response to the first Needs Assessment. You may like to indicate that we are looking to focus our efforts on a fewer number of actions that will have a larger impact that we can demonstrate progress on and build from there.
- In the first instance, we will focus on two key foundational activities:
 - a. Information sharing across agencies to ensure we have good visibility of the broad range of services, including education services, that are provided to children and young people in care or youth justice. How to deliver this was recently discussed by the Social Wellbeing Board Chief Executives and we will have a role in contributing to a cross-agency solution. We will also commence focused work with OT so that we can make progress as this cross-agency piece gets underway.
 - b. Establishing what we know about the children and young people who are the focus of the OTAP and what they have in common with other populations of focus through activities such as the Youth Engagement and Alternative Education work.
- We expect that these key activities will reveal that a significant number of children and young people in care and youth justice are accessing our supports. We can then look towards strengthening these services to better meet the needs of this population.
- You may like to indicate to Minister Davis that the work we are undertaking in relation to attendance services contributes to our fulfilment of Action 2.6 of the Implementation Plan (*Support iwi and Māori social service providers to facilitate and broker educationally powerful relationships*). Further detail of this is provided in Appendix One.
- We have recently provided your Office with advice on prioritising children and young people in care and youth justice for provision of learning support services. Minister Davis may ask you again about this. There is a tension between prioritising the OTAP population, and the Ministry of Education's approach to prioritising all learners according to need. Prioritising one group of learners over another on the basis of their involvement with a given service necessarily means de-prioritising other learners whose educational needs may be more significant.
- However, the issue of prioritisation can be addressed within our current settings by using existing criteria to better meet the needs of children and young people in care or youth justice. Again, information sharing will be the initial focus to enable this work.
- We have also made changes to the structure providing governance and delivery of this work. A team has been established to deliver against the actions of the OTAP and respond to the Needs Assessments.

Our larger work programme also benefits children in care and youth justice

- The work on the OTAP Implementation Plan aligns with a wider network of work programmes the Ministry is undertaking to improve child protection and to support children and young people participate fully in education. Information sharing will be an enabler if we want to further explore developing these initiatives with specific reference to children and young people in care.
- **Youth Engagement** work is currently in a transition phase. This work may benefit children who are in care, although it is not targeted at them. Key Ministry actions to support the Youth Engagement work programme include:
 - a. the Attendance and Engagement Strategy
 - b. work around stand-downs, suspensions, exclusions, and expulsions.
- The Attendance and Engagement Strategy includes an action to work to better understand and respond to the barriers to attendance and engagement for ākonga who come into contact with OT. Again, information sharing will be a powerful enabler.
- The Ministry is contributing to a cross-agency response to the recommendations of **Dame Karen Poutasi's independent review** of the children's system. The Ministry is contributing to working groups OT has set up to progress the recommendations, as well as jointly leading a further recommendation with ERO. This will benefit children who are at risk within the children's system.
- The **Highest Needs Review** found that there is not enough support in the system and too many students are not getting their learning needs met. In November 2022, Cabinet agreed to the direction of travel for a new system of learning support for children and young people with the highest needs. This may benefit children who are in care, although it is not targeted at them.
- The initiation of the **Gateway Assessment Review** is led by OT, as per the Implementation Plan. The Ministry is attending weekly working group meetings and preparing for the review to start in May, including planning sector-specific engagements. This will benefit children in care.
- The Ministry has developed an **Attendance and Engagement Strategy** that sets clear expectations for parents, teachers, government agencies, students and communities. While there are no current initiatives within the Strategy that specifically target children and young people in contact with OT, the Ministry will be focusing more closely on how to benefit this population.

Appendix One:

Actions from the OTAP Implementation Plan	Status
Action 2.5: Develop an Engagement in Learning Strategy (<i>note: this is now known as the Attendance and Engagement Strategy</i>).	This action is complete. Previously, we have reported against the delivery on the Strategy. In terms of delivery, the Ministry has developed a comprehensive programme of work across several targeted delivery streams, and the scope of this programme has been extended to include the implementation of the Attendance Turnaround Package.
Action 2.6: Support iwi and Māori social service providers to facilitate and broker educationally powerful relationships	We have begun work on this. It will be aligned more closely with the Attendance and Engagement Strategy and will also support the Ministry of Education's response to the first Education Needs Assessment.
Actions from the ERO report (actions 7.1, 7.2 and 7.3 in the Implementation Plan).	<p>All the actions from the ERO report are included in the one project, which is now being completely replanned, allowing us to make progress on delivery. The new plan is currently under review prior to formal approval. Enacting this plan will significantly improve project operations, control, and predictability, and provide greater confidence in achieving its objectives. The specific status of the 3 actions follows:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Action 7.1 Improve the quality of students' education while in residence: in progress to meet revised deadlines • Action 7.2 Reduce variability of provision: a policy options paper has been developed on different models of provision and is currently being finalised. The resourcing review has been completed and recommendations are being formulated. • Action 7.3: Increase students' access to education after leaving residence: a new lead has been assigned and the work is on track to meet revised deadlines.