

27 May 2026

s9(2)(a)

Tēnā koe s9(2)(a)

Thank you for your email, received on 7 May 2026, to Oranga Tamariki—Ministry for Children (Oranga Tamariki) requesting information around the availability of libraries in youth justice residences. Your request has been considered under the Official Information Act 1982 (the Act).

You have requested:

Which, if any, youth justice residences have an onsite library?

If they do have a library, how are they staffed? Are there qualified librarians employed there, or to what level of qualifications do the staff have?

Do the young people living in these residences have the opportunity to gain work experience in these libraries?

How accessible are services to the residents? Are they able to access books and other services whenever they would like, or are there certain provisions in place?

If the residences don't have onsite facilities, are there other services available like a mobile library that visits the residences or staff that are able to provide support?

Oranga Tamariki youth justice residences do not typically have libraries; however, residents can obtain access to books through their Case Leader or other Oranga Tamariki kaimahi at the residence. Every youth justice facility also operates a registered school unit onsite, in partnership with the Ministry of Education, with teachers available who can provide books and other resources that meet the young person's needs. One youth justice residence does have access to a mobile library service in their local community.

For the most part, books are a highly accessible resource for young people in residences, although other arrangements are sometimes required, if for example young people have repeatedly damaged the books they have been given. This might look like reading in a more directly supervised, public space, rather than while alone in their room.


The onsite teachers deliver a specialised and highly individualised curriculum adapted for disrupted learning. Education and vocational training are integrated into the daily routines of all Oranga Tamariki youth justice residences.

The primary goal is to ensure young people can continue their learning while in secure care, addressing their individual academic, behavioural, and transitional needs. The curriculum places a heavy emphasis on bridging foundational gaps in reading, writing, and mathematics, with young people being supported to study towards the National Certificate of Educational Achievement (NCEA) or alternative foundational unit standards.

Oranga Tamariki may make the information contained in this letter available to the public by publishing this on our website with your personal details removed.

I trust you find this information useful. Should you have any concerns with this response, I would encourage you to raise them with Oranga Tamariki. Alternatively, you are advised of your right to also raise any concerns with the Office of the Ombudsman. Information about this is available at www.ombudsman.parliament.nz or by contacting them on 0800 802 602.

Nāku noa, nā

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read 'Kathryn Wilson', with a stylized flourish at the end.

Kathryn Wilson
Chief Advisor
Youth Justice Services and Residential Care