

OT-OIA-2026-0213

17 August 2026

s9(2)(a)

Tēnā koe

Thank you for your email, received on 2 July 2026, to Oranga Tamariki—Ministry for Children (Oranga Tamariki) requesting information on Military-style Academies (MSAs). Your request has been considered under the Official Information Act 1982 (the Act).

I have responded to your questions below.

All reports, reviews, audits, and internal communications since the academies' inception that address:

- *Management and leadership issues*
- *Integration between clinical and operational staff*
- *Consistency of therapeutic practice*
- *Staff turnover rates and causes*
- *Safety incidents, including use of force*
- *Organisational culture and transparency*
- *Political influence on academy operations and outcomes*
- *Value for money assessments or cost-benefit analysis*
- *Young people's experiences and outcomes*
- *Staff wellbeing and support*
- *Cultural responsiveness, particularly regarding Māori*
- *Any unverified allegations or complaints received*
- *Any discussions in which participants have been told they must take their medication. Please separate these between the pilot and the second iteration.*

Please provide any the same information as above that has been communicated to the Minister of Children.

In order to collate the information you have requested, a substantial manual review of a significant number of records, communications, and documents would be required. This would have an unreasonable impact on the ability of Oranga Tamariki to carry out its core responsibilities. As such, this part of your request is refused under section

18(f) of the Act, on the grounds that the information requested cannot be made available without substantial collation or research.

Oranga Tamariki considered whether to consult with you to refine this request, as required under section 18B of the Act. However, we do not believe that this would affect our ability to respond to your request.

Oranga Tamariki also considered whether to apply a reasonable charge for the supply of information in accordance with section 15(1A) of the Act. However, due to the uncertainty of whether the information could be released once found, we have decided that a charge is not appropriate in this instance.

Please note that a number of previous responses relevant to this topic have been proactively released on our website, [here](#).

Any guidelines, policies, and procedures currently in place to address the above concerns.

We have not identified the above topics as specific concerns requiring any guidelines, policies, or procedures to address them. As such, this part of your request is refused under section 18(e) of the Act, on the grounds that the documents alleged to contain the information requested do not exist or, despite reasonable efforts to locate them, cannot be found.

Data or summaries of complaints, investigations, or disciplinary actions relating to do with the MSA.

- *Please include any complaints to or correspondence with HR about anything to do with the MSA*
- *Please include any communication or correspondence regarding a potential incident where a participant was stepped or stomped on.*

Information relating to individual employment proceedings constitutes information private to the individuals involved. As such, this part of your request is refused under section 9(2)(a) of the Act, to protect the privacy of natural persons.

We have no record of a potential incident where a participant was stepped or stomped on. As such, this part of your request is refused under section 18(g)(i), that the information requested is not held by the department or venture or Minister of the Crown or organisation and the person dealing with the request has no grounds for believing that the information is held by another department.

Please provide the video footage of a staff member inappropriately restraining a young person in the MSA, or using restraint when it was not required.

We have no record of an incident involving the inappropriate restraining of a young person in the MSA, or the use of restraint where it was not required. As such, this part of your request is refused under section 18(g)(i) of the Act.

IN-CONFIDENCE

Please provide the schedule of the current iteration of the MSA, including how regularly the participants attend or receive therapeutic sessions, and including all other activities or sessions they engage in.

The residential component of the second MSA programme comprised structured daily activities and programming. Morning routines followed a similar format to those in other youth justice residence units and included a 6:30am wake-up, personal hygiene, bed-making, tidying of bedrooms and common areas, and breakfast.

Each day was divided into scheduled sessions, which varied by day and included education, physical exercise, group-based activities, and connection and whānau time on Sundays. Physical activity was generally scheduled at least once daily (excluding Sundays) and included marching and drills, sport, fitness training, and occasional off-site activities such as camping.

Evening activities focused on reflection, wellbeing, and rest, and included group reflection, journalling, free time, and a 9pm lights-out routine.

Clinical residential kaimahi provided both group and individual therapeutic sessions with rangatahi on at least a weekly basis.

The programme also included a structured transition process, with three transition hui for each rangatahi over the 18-week period. These hui focused on transition planning, identifying strengths and interests, and supporting engagement in employment, training, volunteering, or further education upon return to the community.

Please provide a list of the staff members working on the current iteration of the MSA, and the number of staff members who have left since its inception, as well as their titles.

Please outline the number of operational staff and clinical staff assigned to the MSA, how they interact and how many are on site during operational hours.

As of the date of your request, the titles of staff members working on the MSA residential component were as follows:

- 1 x Kaiwhakahaere
- 1 x Programme Lead
- 1 x Programme Coordinator
- 1 x Manager Clinical Programme (Senior Psychologist)
- 3 x Case Leaders
- 1 x Associate Director
- 1 x Unit Team Leader
- 3 x Team Leader Operations
- 15 x Youth Workers
- 2 x Administrative Support Workers.

In addition to the above, there is currently one open vacancy for a Senior Psychologist.

IN-CONFIDENCE

The release of information relating to the employment status of individual staff members would unreasonably prejudice their privacy. As such, this part of your request is refused under section 9(2)(a) of the Act.

Staff working in the residential component of the MSA programme engaged regularly through operational meetings, shift handovers, and their work with rangatahi. As the residence operated on a 24-hour basis, staff attendance onsite varied according to shift arrangements.

Please provide any correspondence, formal or informal, regarding the Minister's expectations, reflections, or response to the MSA.

No correspondence specifically referring to the Minister for Children's expectations, reflections, or response to the MSA programmes was identified. As such, this part of your request is refused under section 18(e) of the Act.

Several briefings relating to the MSA programmes have been proactively released on the Oranga Tamariki website. These briefings include reference to decisions made by the Minister for Children and may be relevant to your request. These can be found on the Oranga Tamariki website [here](#).

Please include any advice or reports on preparation work being done to implement the MSAs once the law has passed.

MSA Orders form part of the proposed Oranga Tamariki (Responding to Serious Youth Offending) Amendment Bill, which is currently before Parliament. As such, this part of your request is refused under 9(2)(f)(iv) of the Act, maintain the constitutional conventions for the time being which protect the confidentiality of advice tendered by Ministers of the Crown and officials.

I can confirm that Oranga Tamariki is preparing for the future legislative regime, including operating and evaluating the MSA Pilot and second MSA programme.

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.



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