OT-OIA-2026-0286

24 September 2026

s9(2)(a) [redacted]

Tēnā koe s9(2)(a)

Thank you for your email, received on 8 September 2026, to Oranga Tamariki—Ministry for Children (Oranga Tamariki) requesting information on further information on Reports of Concern (RoCs) from schools. Your request has been considered under the Official Information Act 1982 (the Act).

I have responded to each of your requests below.

> *Reports from schools have increased from 9,825 in 2020 to 12,525 in 2025. What is behind this increase?*

The percentage increase over this period for RoCs from schools is 27.4%. We have not undertaken research specifically on what is behind this increase from schools, but suggest contributing factors are likely to include:

- The population of New Zealand over the same period increased by 7.8%, per information available on the Stats NZ website here.
- The number of school students in New Zealand over the same period increased by 3.6%, per information available on the Education Counts website here.
- Heightened awareness of child maltreatment following high profile tragedies involving children.
- Announcements of policy initiatives likely to have encouraged Reports of Concern, such as schools and agencies preparing for implementation of mandatory child protection training.
- Overall volume of RoCs from all sources increased by 38.6%, per internal data held by Oranga Tamariki.

We note that the number of RoCs received from schools has increased, but by a lower amount than the overall increase to number of RoCs received in general.

You may be interested in the insights report published by Oranga Tamariki regarding the increase in Reports of Concern received. This can be found on the Oranga Tamariki website here. While this is not focused on schools alone,

data regarding RoCs from schools is included and the document provides a summary of insights into factors behind RoC volume increases.

> *The number of reports where no further action was taken has also increased, from 36 percent in 2020 to 47.5 percent in 2025. Why is this happening?*

Oranga Tamariki does not hold any formal analysis or insights work regarding changes to the percentage of RoCs marked as "No Further Action" (NFAs), including NFAs for RoCs received from schools. In order to respond to this part of your request comprehensively, Oranga Tamariki would need to undertake specific analysis, including a detailed review of case files. Undertaking such an analysis would constitute creation of information which is not supported by the Act.

As such, this part of your request is refused under section 18(g)(i) of the Act, as the information you have requested is not held by Oranga Tamariki, nor is it held by another department.

We note that the insights report provided in response to part one of your request shows that the biggest cluster of increased RoCs received over the period resulted in either "No Further Action" outcomes or initial assessments. This can be attributed in part to the change in how concerns are recorded and an increase in duplicate RoCs – that is, RoCs from different sources about the same incident or concern for a child. It may also indicate a higher proportion of additional RoCs relate to less serious concerns for children and young people.

> *What are the main reasons a report doesn't result in further action?*

The Oranga Tamariki Act 1989 sets out the criteria and circumstances in which Oranga Tamariki should or have to become involved. Decisions are made in accordance with this legislation, based on the individual circumstances of the concern being raised.

A RoC being marked as NFA does not necessarily mean no action was taken. A RoC will be marked NFA following an initial assessment at the National Contact Centre (NCC) or at a site which has concluded that ongoing Oranga Tamariki involvement is not appropriate or warranted. In many cases, we refer families to other services before closing the case. Oranga Tamariki is also a significant funder of early intervention services.

More information about how RoCs are assessed and the Decisions Response Tool we utilise to support this process can be found on the Oranga Tamariki Practice Centre website here.

> *How useful are reports from schools in identifying children who need support?*

RoCs from schools, as with any RoC received by Oranga Tamariki, are useful and important because they alert Oranga Tamariki to concerns about the safety

or wellbeing of children. We encourage anybody who has concerns about the safety or care of any child or young person to submit a RoC, including staff at schools. Oranga Tamariki contacts notifiers after receiving a RoC to seek more information if this is required to ensure we are undertaking the right response.

> *Canterbury had 1,368 reports where no further action was taken last year, compared with 730 where further action was required. Why is the number of reports not resulting in further action so high in Canterbury?*

In order to respond to this part of your request comprehensively, Oranga Tamariki would need to undertake specific analysis, including a detailed review of case files. No such analysis has been undertaken, and undertaking such an analysis would constitute creation of information which is not supported by the Act. As such, this part of your request is refused under section 18(g)(i) of the Act.

We note that the increase in volume of RoCs in Canterbury between 2020 and 2025 was higher than the national average, with an increase of 53%. As per the reasons outlined above, a greater proportion of the increase in RoCs can be attributed to RoCs that were NFAs or initial assessments.

Please note the regions in this data do not specify where the school is. As noted in our previous response, Oranga Tamariki RoC data for schools is counted under the region of the Oranga Tamariki office that handled it. As such, the statistic of 1368 NFAs for Canterbury in 2025 means that 1368 RoCs from schools wer managed by our Canterbury offices, not that 1368 RoCs were received from Canterbury schools.

Prior to July 2024, if the NCC assessed a RoC and concluded that no further action was require, this decision was recorded as having been made by the NCC. From July 2024 onwards, these RoCs are instead passed to the relevant local office for action. As such, the same decision would instead be recorded for that region, rather than the NCC. Due to this change, the figures for 2020 and 2025 are not necessarily directly comparable.

> *Is Oranga Tamariki concerned about the rising number of reports where no further action is taken?*

Our primary concern is the safety and wellbeing of children and young people. This means both responding immediately when risks to children or young people are serious and imminent, and proportionally when there are concerns that require our support but are not urgent. We would be concerned if any response decision is made inappropriately, including a NFA decision, but changing proportions of RoCs on their own are not necessarily a concern.

Response decisions must be approved by supervisors, and we undertake periodic quality assurance over samples of decisions to support quality and consistent decision making.

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. If you wish to discuss this response with us, please feel free to contact OIA_Requests@ot.govt.nz. 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



Thomas Ronan
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