



Relationship Agreement

Office of the Children's Commissioner and Oranga Tamariki

Introduction

Oranga Tamariki and the Office of the Children's Commissioner recognise that they have shared aspirations for the implementation of the Oranga Tamariki Act, while accepting that the Office of the Children's Commissioner has an independent developmental, monitoring and investigative role under Section 13 of the Children's Commissioner Act 2003 in relation to the policies, practices and services of Oranga Tamariki. We are both committed to Te Tiriti o Waitangi and have a duty to advocate for and ensure meaningful engagement with Māori as tangata whenua. In addition, we each seek to deliver service excellence across our areas of responsibility.

In practice, these responsibilities mean a shared commitment to whole system advocacy, to bringing about societal change on behalf of children, and to reducing disparity and improving outcomes for tamariki Māori, seeing them within the context of their whānau, hapū and iwi.

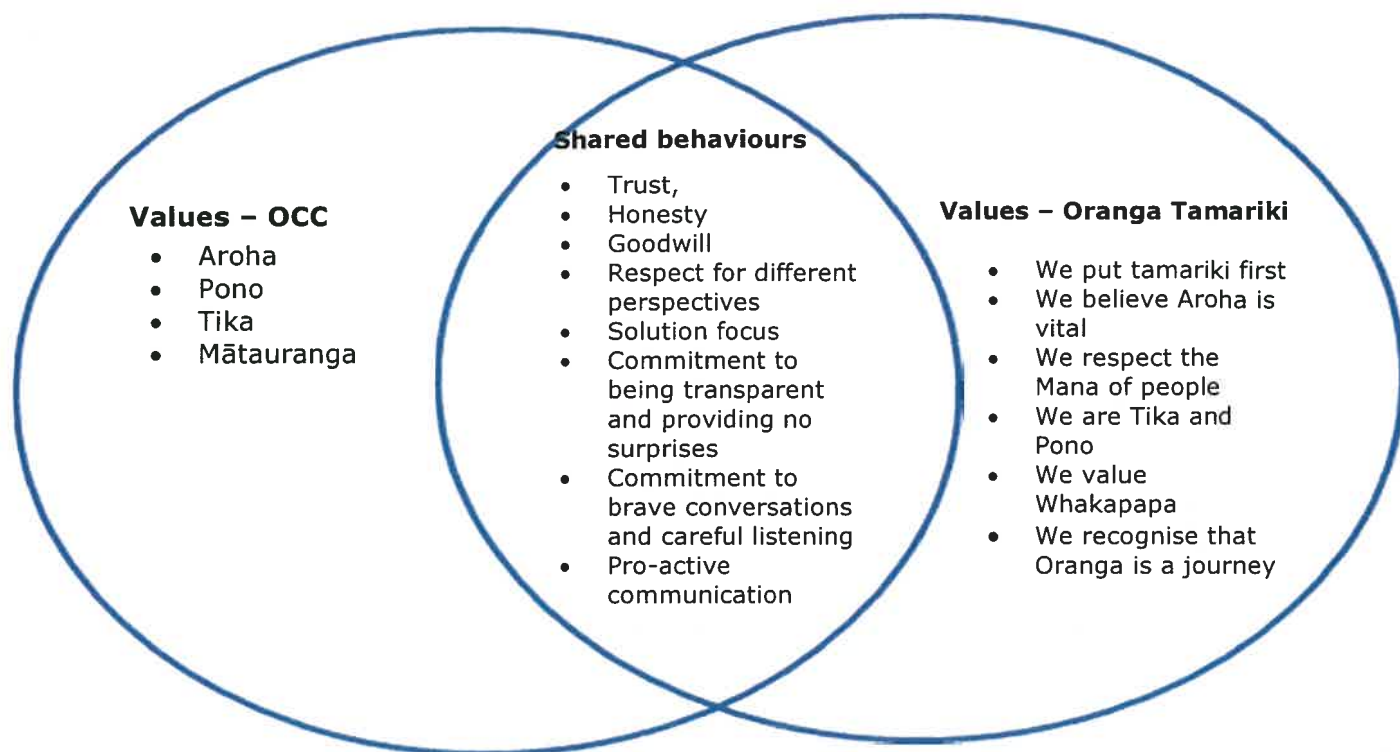
The high aspirations we hold for the well-being of all New Zealand's children also mean we both want to ensure the views of New Zealand children and their families and whānau are genuinely heard and acted on.

This Relationship Agreement reflects the commitments, work and values we share.

We believe that by working constructively together in these areas of shared commitment we can have significant collective impact that would be lost if we worked in isolation.

Values and behaviour

The Office of the Children's Commissioner and Oranga Tamariki have each identified values to guide their work. Taken together, these values generate behaviours we believe should characterise our working relationship.



Opportunities

Some avenues where we may have significant impact working together include (but are not limited to):

- Improving the way we work to better support positive outcomes for Māori tamariki and their whānau
- Honouring the rights of all children in accordance with Te Tiriti o Waitangi, the United Nations Convention on the Rights of the Child and New Zealand law
- Sharing information for common projects as appropriate
- Sharing our annual strategic priorities
- Leveraging off each other's communications
- Harnessing each other's skills, resources and expertise
- Co-scoping and co-designing developmental and thematic monitoring reviews
- Sharing in a virtuous improvement cycle of continuous learning, feedback and capability development
- Sharing our work programmes

We further agree that we will develop specific agreed and written processes for those areas where we work most closely together e.g. monitoring (including developmental reviews), public reporting, OCC Child Rights line.

Negotiating tensions

There are a number of strategies we can adopt to dispel tensions before they emerge and, if they do arise, to find ways to work them through. These include:

- Keeping focused on our common goal of bringing about societal change on behalf of our shared population of children
- Respecting the mandate of each other's role
- Being mindful of our shared values
- Walking in our partner's shoes
- Listening for intent rather than acting on false assumptions or stereotypes
- Challenging each other constructively
- Building a shared language
- Staying in the relationship even when it is hard
- Ensuring we regularly engage face-to-face
- Learning when and how to live with disagreement without losing respect
- Proactively sharing potential issues

The Children's Commissioner and the Chief Executive of Oranga Tamariki will review this agreement in 12 months.



Gráinne Moss, Chief Executive, Oranga Tamariki



Andrew Becroft, Children's Commissioner

Date: 19 JUNE 2018