

In Confidence

Office of the Minister for Children

Office of the Minister for Social Investment

Cabinet Social Outcomes Committee

Report back: Oranga Tamariki and Social Investment Agency review of Oranga Tamariki Early Support and Prevention funding and services

Proposal

- 1 This paper reports back on Phase One of the joint Oranga Tamariki–Social Investment Agency review of early support and prevention services, summarising results on their reach, impact and value for money and sets out proposed next steps.

Relation to government priorities

- 2 The proposals in this paper support the Government’s goal to deliver efficient, effective and responsive public services and to implement a social investment approach to drive better outcomes for people with high needs.

Executive Summary

- 3 In 2025, Cabinet tasked Oranga Tamariki and the Social Investment Agency with reviewing Oranga Tamariki early support and prevention funding and services to ensure they align with government priorities for improving outcomes for children and young people. Five large programmes and one national provider, totalling approximately \$126 million, were prioritised for Phase One of the review. The review has assessed each programme using reach, impact, value for money. Further work on operational factors is yet to be completed.
- 4 The review identified that Family Start, Strengthening Families and Workers in Schools suite of programmes mainly reach children and young people who have not come to the attention of Oranga Tamariki but are experiencing early risk factors to their safety and wellbeing requiring targeted supports. These programmes contribute to multiple portfolio outcomes. While most programmes have qualitative evidence showing some impact, this is generally not borne out in the available quantitative data. As the programmes prevent children and young people from entering care or youth justice, we recommend that these programmes be redesigned, targeting be improved and better outcome and performance measures put in place. We also recommend, subject to further work, that:
 - 4.1 Strengthening Families programme and funding transfer to Te Puni Kōkiri for delivery via the Whānau Ora Commissioning Agencies to align navigation services.

- 4.2 Family Start programme and funding transfer to the Social Investment Fund to ensure it is better targeted and considered alongside other services delivered in the first 2000 days.
 - 4.3 the Workers in Schools suite of programmes and funding transfer to the Ministry of Education, to ensure it is redesigned to provide targeted support to children experiencing early risk factors while maintaining the support schools, children and communities rely upon.
- 5 For both Gateway programmes and the national provider, the review identified they mainly serve children and young people already in care, or on the cusp of care or youth justice. The two Gateway programmes contribute to mainly Oranga Tamariki, Health and Whānau Ora portfolio outcomes. These programmes showed some qualitative evidence of impact, but this is not reflected in the available quantitative data. The national provider programmes contribute to multiple portfolio outcomes and showed positive results across both qualitative and quantitative data. We recommend that:
- 5.1 the two Gateway programmes remain with Oranga Tamariki due to their role in supporting children and young people in the care system or on its cusp experiencing significant safety and wellbeing risks, while agencies work together to improve, amongst other things, coverage and outcome measurement.
 - 5.2 the national provider remains with Oranga Tamariki, s9(2)(f)(iv) [REDACTED]
- 6 Next steps will also involve Oranga Tamariki and the Social Investment Agency beginning Phase Two of the review of Oranga Tamariki early support and prevention services, engaging with providers and using secure AI tools to analyse 760 services delivered by approximately 200 providers.

Background

- 7 The Social Investment Fund provides shared system architecture designed to support commissioning for cross-cutting outcomes across multiple portfolios in line with government priorities. The Fund is focused on investing in early support and prevention services for families with multiple and complex needs.
- 8 In April 2024, Cabinet tasked the Social Investment Agency with leading an ongoing review of social sector spending to measure outcomes [CAB MIN-24-SUB-0140 refers], and directed the Social Investment Agency and the Treasury to work with social sector agencies to identify funding that could move into new Social Investment Fund appropriations [CAB-25-MIN-0108.02 refers].
- 9 In October 2025, Cabinet noted that five large programmes and the specialist services of one large national provider, totalling approximately \$126 million, were prioritised for review and invited the Minister for Social Investment and the Minister for Children to jointly report back on this work by 30 March 2026 [SOU-25-MIN-0133 refers]. The programmes are:

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- 9.1 Family Start - intensive home-visiting programme supporting parents and caregivers through challenges during their child's early years.
 - 9.2 Strengthening Families – navigation service helping families access coordinated services and support.
 - 9.3 Workers in Schools (including Social Workers in Schools, Youth Workers in Secondary Schools and Multi-Agency Support Services in Secondary Schools - school-based services providing early support to children and young people to enhance wellbeing, strengthen family connections, and address emerging needs before they escalate.
 - 9.4 Gateway - provides specialist assessments to identify health, education, disability, social, and wellbeing needs of children and young people involved with Oranga Tamariki.
 - 9.5 Post-Gateway - supports children and young people in care or custody or at high risk of entering care with mental health, disability and addiction needs.
 - 9.6 Large National Provider s9(2)(ba)(i) & 9(2)(j) - provides trauma-informed, bicultural services supporting children and families with complex trauma.
- 10 In response to three external reviews including the Auditor-General's report in 2025, Oranga Tamariki is preparing to recommission for outcomes in line with its new Commissioning and Investment Plan. This recommissioning process commences this year and will carry over the next four years with an initial focus on youth justice therapeutic and mentoring services and statutory care services.
- 11 In October 2025, Cabinet agreed an integrated approach to strengthen the children's system to protect against and better respond to child harm, in response to the recommendations of the Dame Karen Poutasi Review. Making better use of the resources in early support and prevention services can play an important role in reducing the pressures on the statutory parts of the system, protecting against harm before it occurs.

Approach to the review

Criteria for assessing programmes and developing proposals

- 12 The review criteria (set by Cabinet and subsequently refined by Oranga Tamariki and the Social Investment Agency, with further refinement informed by provider feedback) recognised that each programme needed to demonstrate:
- 12.1 reach (who is being served and whether outcomes span multiple portfolios),
 - 12.2 impact (evidence from children and families, providers, case studies, the Integrated Data Infrastructure (IDI), previous evaluations and international literature scans),
 - 12.3 value for money (total cost to serve).
 - 12.4 key operational factors including how the programme:
 - 12.4.1 supports the statutory duties of the Chief Executive of Oranga Tamariki,
 - 12.4.2 maintains priority referral pathways and service continuity,
 - 12.4.3 can be legally given effect and the statutory decision-making framework to apply to transferred services, and

12.4.4 financial implications of any transfer have been assessed,

12.4.5 aligns with existing cross-agency work.

- 13 A more detailed outline of the review criteria is set out in Appendix One. Application of the criteria was informed by considering the safety and wellbeing risks and needs of the cohort of children each programme served.
- 14 Some small investment in parts of programmes in this review are delivered or commissioned by Oranga Tamariki strategic iwi partners with initiatives underway to redesign and reimagine what care and protection looks like for children, young people and their families. These Enabling Communities initiatives devolve resources and decision-making powers and support the Chief Executive of Oranga Tamariki to meet their statutory duties under section 7 of the Oranga Tamariki Act 1989. In addition, some small investment in parts of the programmes is also already being considered for transfer to, and progressed through, the Social Investment contract consolidation pathway. The specific investment linked to Enabling Communities initiatives or already progressing through Social Investment Fund contract consolidation have been excluded from the review.

The review to date found mixed results and confirmed room for improvement

- 15 The review did not take a portfolio-level view of investment or assess system-wide support mix or service gaps. The programmes reviewed are a narrow subset of Oranga Tamariki early support and prevention services and are not directly comparable due to differences in purpose, scale, and delivery model.
- 16 Overall, the review found mixed results across the programmes: some have wide reach, serving mainly children experiencing early risk factors requiring the targeted support delivered by early support and prevention services and programmes. Some of the programmes reviewed serve children with significant safety and wellbeing risks on the cusp of care or youth justice or already in care or youth justice facilities.
- 17 Although quantitative impact data is limited, qualitative evidence consistently points to short term benefits like improved parenting, emotional regulation, school engagement and crisis prevention. Providers refer to these as ‘micro-impacts’ - small, individual changes representing meaningful change to the children and families experiencing them but that cannot currently be traced to large datasets like the IDI. International evidence shows that well targeted early support and prevention services can produce modest positive returns.
- 18 However, operational issues including inconsistent delivery quality, incomplete coverage, poor targeting and limited data infrastructure have reduced overall value for money. What is clear from the review is that:
- 18.1 continuing to fund early support and prevention programmes is necessary to prevent children and young people coming into care and youth justice;
 - 18.2 retargeting and redesign of programmes is required;
 - 18.3 there are opportunities for Oranga Tamariki and other social sector agencies to strengthen data collection and use, with a focus on outcome measurement and

monitoring and evaluation to improve effectiveness and enable clearer attribution of change.

- 19 We recommend further work to complete consideration of the operational factors criterion for the programmes that are being considered for redesign or transition prior to any Vote transfer decisions are made.
- 20 Appendix Two provides a more detailed summary of the review’s results to date.

Summary of results by programme

Gateway assessments and targeted support post-Gateway

Total current contracted cost and # providers	Gateway: \$9(2)(j) from Vote Oranga Tamariki, 21 co-ordination functions, provided by 1 provider - Health NZ Post-Gateway: \$9(2)(j) from Vote Oranga Tamariki, 11 providers across 3 service types
Reach	High access by children in care or youth justice/on the cusp
Outcome Range (portfolios)	3 portfolios (Oranga Tamariki, Health and Whānau Ora)
Impact	Moderate (Gateway), limited evidence (Post Gateway)
Evidence quality	Low-medium (descriptive, no statistical tests)
Cost to Serve	High

- 21 Gateway and post-Gateway services support children and young people in care or youth justice, or on its cusp. These children and young people are experiencing the highest risks to their safety and wellbeing. Gateway services show moderate short-term benefits for children’s health and development, while evidence for post-Gateway services is limited. Effective delivery depends on strong operational integration between Oranga Tamariki, Education, and Health NZ. Both Oranga Tamariki and Health NZ contribute funding to the Gateway programme.
- 22 The Gateway and Post-Gateway programmes should remain with Oranga Tamariki. Ministers have endorsed the redesigned Gateway Assessment service and agencies are working to test and implement this new model (which will need to include a strengthened focus on outcome measurement), as a key focus area under the Oranga Tamariki System Action Plan.
- 23 Oranga Tamariki, the Ministry of Education, Ministry of Health and Health NZ should report back to responsible portfolio Ministers by 26 February 2027 on the Gateway and Post-Gateway programmes including the progress of national improvements to address coverage, consent processes, contractual arrangements, outcome measurement and quality.

Strengthening Families

Total current contracted cost and # providers within scope of the review	\$9(2)(j) 30 providers delivered across parts of NZ
Reach	Widely accessed by children and young people that have not come to the attention of Oranga Tamariki. Accessed by some that have come to the attention of Oranga Tamariki.
Outcome Range (portfolios)	5+ portfolios (Oranga Tamariki, , Health, Education, Whanau Ora, Employment, Family Violence & Sexual Violence)

IN CONFIDENCE

Impact	Moderate
Evidence quality	Low-medium (descriptive, no statistical tests)
Cost to Serve	Low

- 24 Strengthening Families mainly reaches children and young people who have not come to the attention of Oranga Tamariki but are experiencing early risk factors to their safety and wellbeing requiring targeted supports (i.e. it has wide reach). It supports outcomes across multiple portfolios and helps keep children out of care or youth justice. While qualitative evidence demonstrates micro-impacts visible at local and regional levels, quantitative evidence of impact is limited.
- 25 The programme’s core function is to coordinate agencies around the needs of children and families, rather than deliver a standalone service. This aligns closely with the kaupapa and commissioning model of Whānau Ora Commissioning Agency system. The programme could also benefit from retargeting and redesign to ensure it is effective and that the impact is visible to portfolio Ministers.

Family Start

Total current contracted cost and # providers within scope of the review	§9(2)(j) 32 providers delivered across parts of NZ
Reach	Widely accessed by children and young people that have not come to the attention of Oranga Tamariki. Accessed by some that have come to the attention of Oranga Tamariki and may be on the cusp of care.
Outcome Range (portfolios)	5 portfolios (Health, Education, Whānau Ora, Family Violence & Sexual Violence and Oranga Tamariki)
Impact	Moderate
Evidence quality	High (relatively robust evaluation method, consistent impacts from 3 independent evaluations over a decade)
Cost to Serve	Medium for a home visiting model

- 26 Family Start reaches children who have not come to the attention of Oranga Tamariki but are experiencing early risk factors to their safety and wellbeing requiring targeted supports. These are mainly children with moderate safety and wellbeing needs. It also supports some children experiencing high risks to their safety and wellbeing, i.e. those who are on the cusp of care or have come to the attention of Oranga Tamariki. Evidence shows positive short term impacts on infant health, parenting capability, mental health and family safety.
- 27 The programme contributes to outcomes across multiple portfolios. It remains valuable, particularly in the first 2000 days, would benefit from better targeting and considered alongside other services delivered in the first 2000 days and aligned with the Social Investment Fund.

Workers in Schools suite of programmes

Total contracted cost and # providers within scope of the review	\$ 32 Social Workers in Schools providers, 6 Youth Workers in Schools providers and 7 Multi-Agency Support Services in Secondary Schools services providers delivered across parts of NZ
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Reach	Widely accessed by children and young people that have not come to the attention of Oranga Tamariki. Accessed by some that have come to the attention of Oranga Tamariki.
Outcome Range (portfolios)	5+ portfolios (Oranga Tamariki, Health, Education, Family Violence & Sexual Violence, Youth Justice, Whānau Ora)
Impact	Moderate
Evidence quality	Low (no statistical tests, some qualitative evidence of impact)
Cost to Serve	Medium-High (for a school-based support model)

- 28 The Workers in Schools suite of programmes (Social Workers in Schools, Youth Workers in Schools, and Multi-Agency Support Services in Secondary Schools) reaches children who have not come to the attention of Oranga Tamariki but are experiencing early risk factors to their safety and wellbeing requiring targeted supports (i.e. it has wide reach). The programme supports children and families mainly with moderate safety and wellbeing needs. It also supports some children experiencing high risks to their safety and wellbeing, i.e., those who are on the cusp of care or who have come to the attention of Oranga Tamariki. The programmes support multiple portfolio outcomes. Evidence shows some positive impact on youth justice issues for Māori and Pacific boys, and qualitative insights suggest the service is valued, but quantitative evidence of impact is limited.
- 29 The programmes have strong school-based referral pathways and close integration into school environments. This is valued by schools and communities. The programmes would benefit from clear targeting and measurable outcomes, a redesign to ensure it is effective and that the impact is visible to portfolio Ministers and aligned with the education system.

Large National Provider §9(2)(ba)(i) & §9(2)(j)

Total contracted cost	§9(2)(ba)(i) & §9(2)(j)
Reach	High access by children and young people on the cusp of care or youth justice.
Outcome Range (portfolios)	5 portfolios (Oranga Tamariki, Health, Education, Whānau Ora, Family Violence & Sexual Violence)
Impact	Moderate
Evidence quality	Moderate-High (casual attribution possible with quantitative data, strong previous evaluations)
Cost to Serve	Medium-High

- 30 The large national provider reaches children and young people experiencing high risks to safety and wellbeing, including those on the cusp of care and youth justice. It contributes to multiple portfolio outcomes. High quality qualitative and quantitative evidence and data indicate consistent improvements in child wellbeing, behaviour and engagement.
- 31 We recommend the programme §9(2)(ba)(i) & §9(2)(j) remain with Oranga Tamariki as the services it delivers are critical to managing current demand. No changes are recommended to the design of the programme or its outcome measurement.
- 32 Oranga Tamariki will start recommissioning for specialist services that support and help manage the high risks / needs of children and young people in 2027/28. §9(2)(ba)(i) & §9(2)(j)

s9(2)(ba)(i) & s9(2)(j)

Next steps

- 33 Oranga Tamariki will work with relevant agencies to jointly report back to portfolio ministers as set out below, keeping both Child and Youth and Social Investment Ministers informed.
- 34 All redesign and transition and implementation plans will need to complete an assessment of the operational factors set out in Appendix One including financial implications set out in paragraphs 41-43.

Programme	Report back on	Responsible	Date	Rationale for timeframe	Potential transfer date
Gateway and Post-Gateway	Improvements to address coverage, consent processes, contractual arrangements, outcome measurement and quality	Oranga Tamariki, Ministry of Education, Ministry of Health, Health NZ	26 Feb 2027	To enable decisions prior to 2027 Budget moratorium	N/A
Strengthening Families	Redesign of programme, transition and implementation plan for delivery via the Whānau Ora Commissioning Agencies	Oranga Tamariki, Te Puni Kōkiri	26 Feb 2027	To enable decisions prior to 2027 Budget moratorium	1 July 2027 earliest
Workers in Schools	Redesign of programmes and transition and implementation plan for delivery via the Ministry of Education.	Oranga Tamariki, Education, Health, Health NZ	31 August 2027	To enable time to unpick cross-agency dependencies, engage with schools and providers and align referral pathways while maintaining essential school-based supports.	Post 31 August 2027
Family Start	Redesign of programme and transition and implementation plan for delivery via the Social Investment Fund.	Oranga Tamariki, Social Investment Agency	26 Feb 2027	To enable decisions prior to 2027 Budget moratorium	1 July 2027 earliest

- 35 During the development of the transition and implementation plans, some central agencies (Social Investment Agency, Treasury, Public Service Commission and the Department of the Prime Minister and Cabinet) will be involved from time to time due to their expertise.
- 36 We also recommend that Cabinet delegates authority to the Ministers for Children, Finance and the responsible portfolio Minister to approve any programme and funding transfers within one month of transition and implementation plans being agreed.
- 37 Oranga Tamariki and the Social Investment Agency will also advise on the approach to Phase Two of the review of Oranga Tamariki early support and prevention services, covering around \$113 million of investment in services by 31 July 2026. Using lessons identified in Phase One of the review, officials also intend to use secure AI tools to help analyse 760 services across roughly 200 providers.

Cost-of-living Implications

- 38 There are no cost-of-living implications in these proposals.

Financial Implications

s9(2)(ba)(i) & s9(2)(j)

39 s9(2)(ba)(i) & s9(2)(j)

40 s9(2)(ba)(i) & s9(2)(j)

41 s9(2)(ba)(i) & s9(2)(j)

42 s9(2)(ba)(i) & s9(2)(j)

Transfers of the Phase One Programmes

43 s9(2)(ba)(i) [Redacted]

44 s9(2)(ba)(i) [Redacted]

45 s9(2)(ba)(i) [Redacted]

Legislative Implications

46 Legislative change is not required at this stage.

Impact Analysis

Regulatory Impact Statement

47 No Regulatory Impact Analysis is required for the proposals in this paper.

Climate Implications of Policy Assessment

48 There are no climate implications.

Population Implications

49 Children: primary beneficiaries of early support and prevention services. The impacts will depend on transition quality and maintenance of referral pathways.

50 Māori and Pacific peoples: a significant proportion of tamariki and rangatahi Māori and their whānau who use these services and/or are involved with Oranga Tamariki. Design and commissioning should reflect family and whānau-centred approaches and cultural safety, avoid disproportionate impacts during transition and ensure equitable access for these populations.

51 Disabled children and young people and caregivers: commissioning should account for accessibility, continuity of multidisciplinary supports and regional network capability, avoid disproportionate impacts during transition and ensure equitable access for this population.

- 52 Rural communities: transition and implementation planning should explicitly address coverage, regional network capability and travel constraints to mitigate service gaps for rural populations.
- 53 Gender diverse, ethnic and faith-based communities: commissioning should ensure inclusive, culturally appropriate services and language access and equitable access to services where needed.

Human Rights

- 54 The proposals are consistent with the New Zealand Bill of Rights Act 1990 and the Human Rights Act 1993.

Use of external resources

- 55 Oranga Tamariki contracted Nicholson Consulting and Ernst and Young from August 2025 to February 2026 to undertake impact modelling in the IDI to assess service effectiveness. The total cost was \$216,520.
- 56 The Social Investment Agency contracted Martin Jenkins from November 2025 to March 2026 to support the review. The cost was \$94,864.

Consultation

- 57 Departments consulted on this paper included the Ministries of Education, Health and Social Development, Te Puni Kōkiri, The Treasury, Public Service Commission and the Centre for the Prevention of Family Violence and Sexual Violence. The Department of the Prime Minister and Cabinet was informed.
- 58 Oranga Tamariki and the Social Investment Agency met monthly with providers delivering the programmes and services under review and provided them with regular fortnightly email updates.
- 59 Oranga Tamariki have engaged with strategic iwi partners on the scope and results of the review and taken on board their comments in the development of this paper.

Communications

- 60 A comprehensive communications plan is being developed to ensure providers in scope of the review are kept up to date with decisions. Key messages will also be developed for strategic iwi partners, and other key stakeholders who may have an interest in the review to limit risks relating to misinformation and ensure transparency around the review. Key messages will be updated as decisions are made.

Proactive Release

- 61 Ministers intend that this Cabinet paper and minute will be proactively released within 30 business days of decisions being confirmed, subject to relevant redactions.

Recommendations

The Minister for Social Investment and Minister for Children recommend that the Cabinet Social Outcomes Committee:

Background

- 1 **Note** that, in October 2025, Cabinet:
 - 1.1 noted that five large programmes totalling approximately \$126 million, together with one large national provider are prioritised for review;
 - 1.2 invited the Minister for Social Investment and the Minister for Children to jointly report back on this work by 30 March 2026 [SOU-25-MIN-0133 refers].
- 2 **Note** the Social Investment Fund is shared social sector architecture intended to invest in improving long-term outcomes across multiple portfolios, particularly for children, young people and families experiencing persistent disadvantage.
- 3 **Note** the review criteria (approved by Cabinet and subsequently refined by Oranga Tamariki and the Social Investment Agency, with further refinement informed by provider feedback) recognised that each programme needed to demonstrate:
 - 3.1 **Reach** – which children, young people and families are receiving support from each programme and the outcomes that are being generated across different portfolios.
 - 3.2 **Impact** – how effective is the programme.
 - 3.3 **Value for money** – what is the cost per participant and is there evidence of avoided future harm or cost.
 - 3.4 **Operational factors** – including how the programme:
 - 3.4.1 supports the statutory duties of the Chief Executive of Oranga Tamariki,
 - 3.4.2 maintains priority referral pathways and service continuity,
 - 3.4.3 can be legally given effect and the statutory decision-making framework to apply to transferred services, and
 - 3.4.4 financial implications of any transfer have been assessed,
 - 3.4.5 aligns with existing cross-agency work.
- 4 **Note** the specific small investments linked to Oranga Tamariki Enabling Communities initiatives or already progressing through Social Investment Fund contract consolidation pathway have been excluded from the review.

Gateway and Targeted Support Post-Gateway

- 5 **Note** Gateway and Targeted Support Post-Gateway programmes reach children and young people on the cusp of, or in the care of Oranga Tamariki or youth justice, contribute to multiple portfolio outcomes, while their impact requires better outcome and performance measurement.

Strengthening Families, Family Start and Workers in Schools

- 6 **Note** that Strengthening Families, Family Start and the suite of Workers in Schools (Social Workers in Schools, Youth Workers in Secondary Schools and Multi-Agency Support Services in Secondary Schools) programmes:
 - 6.1 reach mainly reach children and young people who have not come to the attention of Oranga Tamariki but are experiencing early risk factors to their safety and wellbeing requiring targeted supports
 - 6.2 contribute to multiple portfolio outcomes
 - 6.3 have limited good-quality quantitative data on impact, although providers regularly report about micro-impacts that are not seen in the quantitative and population level data.

s9(2)(ba)(i) & s9(2)(j) a large national provider

- 7 **Note** that the programmes delivered by **s9(2)(ba)(i) & s9(2)(j)**
 - 7.1 reaches children and young people experiencing high risks to safety and wellbeing, including those on the cusp of care and youth justice;
 - 7.2 has data demonstrating consistent improvements in mental health, emotional regulation, family communication, and increased school engagement.

8 **s9(2)(ba)(i) & s9(2)(j)**

Next Steps

- 9 **Note** that Ministers have endorsed the redesigned Gateway Assessment service and agencies are working to test and implement this new model (which will need to include a strengthened focus on outcome measurement), as a key focus area under the Oranga Tamariki System Action Plan.
- 10 **Direct** Oranga Tamariki, the Ministry of Education, Ministry of Health and Health NZ to report back to responsible portfolio Ministers by 26 February 2027 on the Gateway and Post-Gateway programme including the progress of national improvements to address coverage, consent processes, contractual arrangements, outcome measurement and quality.

- 11 **Agree** to retarget and redesign Strengthening Families, Family Start and the Workers in Schools suite of programmes to more effectively achieve a range of outcomes and to ensure those outcomes are visible to relevant portfolio Ministers.
- 12 **Agree** to transfer Strengthening Families, Family Start and the Workers in Schools suite of programmes so that they can be commissioned more effectively, subject to further advice on a transition and implementation plan for each transfer.
- 13 **Direct** Oranga Tamariki and Te Puni Kōkiri to report back to responsible portfolio Ministers by 26 February 2027 on the transition and implementation plan for transfer of the Strengthening Families programme and funding for delivery via the Whānau Ora Commissioning Agencies.
- 14 **Direct** Oranga Tamariki and the Social Investment Agency to report back to responsible portfolio Ministers by 26 February 2027 on a transition and implementation plan for the transfer of the Family Start programme and funding to the Social Investment Fund, including how the funding will be better targeted and considered alongside other services delivered in the first 2000 days.
- 15 **Direct** Oranga Tamariki, the Ministries for Education and Health, and Health NZ to report back to responsible portfolio Ministers by 31 August 2027 on a transition and implementation plan for the transfer of the Workers in Schools suite of programmes and funding, including how these programmes will be redesigned and better targeted.
- 16 **Agree** the redesign and transition and implementation plans referred to in recommendation 13-15 will need to include the operational matters set out in recommendation 3.4.
- 17 **Note** that during the redesign and transition periods Oranga Tamariki will remain the commissioning agency for all services.
- 18 **Authorise** responsible portfolio Ministers to confirm the detailed scale and scope of the redesign, and timing of any transition and implementation.
- 19 **Authorise** the Minister for Children, Minister of Finance and responsible portfolio Ministers to agree any subsequent transfers of programmes and Vote funding after transition and implementation plans have been developed and agreed.
- 20 **Direct** Oranga Tamariki and the Social Investment Agency to report back to joint Ministers by 31 July 2026 with the proposed approach for Phase two of this review, comprising approximately \$113 million of 760 contracted early support and prevention services across roughly 200 providers.

Financial implications

- 21 s9(2)(ba)(i) & s9(2)(j)


	s9(2)(ba)(i) & s9(2)(j)				
[REDACTED]	[REDACTED]	[REDACTED]	[REDACTED]	[REDACTED]	[REDACTED]
[REDACTED]					
[REDACTED]	[REDACTED]		[REDACTED]		
[REDACTED]	[REDACTED]		[REDACTED]		

22 s9(2)(ba)(i) [REDACTED]

‘Authorised for lodgement’

Hon Nicola Willis
Minister for Social Investment

Hon Karen Chhour
Minister for Children

Appendix One: Assessment criteria

1. Reach and commissioning approach

Reach and commissioning approach was measured by who the services are reaching and whether the intended outcomes extend across more than one portfolio i.e.:

- a) Assessing Oranga Tamariki reach: whether the programme is reaching children and young people that come to the attention of Oranga Tamariki and identifying the intensity and focus of need required by the child and their family.
- b) Identifying outcomes the programme contributes to: whether the programmes are aimed at addressing mostly Oranga Tamariki outcomes, or outcomes of value to a range of portfolios.

These criteria will help identify an ideal commissioning approach.

2. Impact and Value for money

Impact and value for money was assessed across multiple dimensions including:

- a) Key Oranga Tamariki outcomes: whether the programmes had a positive impact on entries/re-entries to care and notifications
- b) Contracted outcomes: what were the outcomes/outputs expected from the programmes when first designed and contracted
- c) Other portfolio outcomes: from additional quantitative analysis using the IDI, what do we know about the impact of these programmes on other outcomes (e.g., school attendance/attainment, health outcomes, etc).
- d) International comparators: what impacts can we see from similarly designed initiatives overseas.
- e) Qualitative evaluation, provider case studies and information submitted during the review: what participants and providers say about the impact of these programmes.
- f) Value for money: what was the total cost of the programme and cost per participant/cost to service and whether the money could be better spent or targeted to address specific needs or achieve particular outcomes (taking account of the results of the impact review).

3. Operational factors

The following operational factors to be applied to each programme to determine what should transfer and how that transfer should be undertaken:

- a) The extent to which the programmes supports the statutory duties of the Chief Executive of Oranga Tamariki. This is particularly applicable to:
 - i. How a service supports the statutory duties of the Chief Executive of Oranga Tamariki:

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- by giving effect to the purposes and principles of the Oranga Tamariki Act and regulations including National Care Standards
 - any service provided as part of an Enabling Communities initiative which enable compliance with section 7 is therefore excluded from any review recommendations
- b) priority referrals and referral pathways for Oranga Tamariki
- c) safeguarding continuity of service for children and young people and families, especially in rural and remote communities.
- d) confirming individual providers with funding who have applications in the Social Investment Fund contract consolidation process should be transferred to the Fund as previously agreed with Ministers (and therefore are excluded from any review recommendations).
- e) how a transfer may be legally given effect and the statutory decision-making framework to apply to transferred services.
- f) the financial implications of any transfer have been assessed.
- g) implications on cross-agency work already underway.