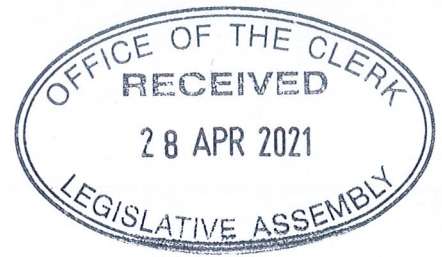




**The Hon Gareth Ward MP**  
Minister for Families and Communities  
Minister for Disability Services



EAP21/680

Ms Helen Minnican  
Clerk of the Legislative Assembly  
Parliament House  
Macquarie Street  
SYDNEY NSW 2000

Dear Ms Minnican,

*Helen,*  
Thank you for your correspondence dated 22 June 2020 regarding the Committee on Children and Young People's 2020 review of annual reports and other matters of the Advocate for Children and Young People.

The Government thanks the Committee for Children and Young People for its comprehensive report on the work of the Advocate for Children and Young People, and is pleased to note the Committee's finding that the Office of the Advocate for Children and Young People has been fulfilling its functions and following the principles governing its work as specified by the *Advocate for Children and Young People Act 2014*.

The Office of the Advocate provided an independent response to the recommendations in December 2020. I received a copy of this response and support the Advocate's comments.

I would like to take the opportunity to thank the former Advocate, Andrew Johnson, and Zoe Robinson who acted in the role during 2020 and has now been formally appointed to the position, for their work during the reporting period. The voices of over 28,000 children and young people, 10,000 of these face to face, is a very significant achievement.

In relation to the NSW Government's response, the Government also supports the recommendations made by the Committee.

In relation to the first recommendation, I have now received a copy of the review of the 2016-19 Strategic Plan. Once finalised, a copy will be sent to the Committee. Work has begun on the development of the new Strategic Plan, and both my office and the office of the Hon. Bronnie Taylor, Minister for Regional Youth have been consulted.

I will be working with the Advocate to prioritise the development of the new Strategic Plan, and will ensure that the Advocate reports back to the Committee on the work done by other government sector agencies that are given responsibility for implementing the new Strategic Plan.

I would like to thank the Committee's dedication to ensuring the best possible outcomes for the children and young people of NSW.

Yours sincerely,

A handwritten signature in blue ink, appearing to read 'Gareth Ward', written in a cursive style.

**THE HON GARETH WARD MP**  
Minister for Families and Communities  
Minister for Disability Services

16-3-21.