

1257074

Registered provider: Branas Isaf (Holdings) Limited

Full inspection

Inspected under the social care common inspection framework

Information about this children's home

This home is owned by a private organisation. It specialises in providing therapeutic care for eight boys up to the age of 18 who present with sexually harmful behaviours. The home provides accommodation across five settings that range from individual solo-living cottages to shared-living homes.

The manager has been registered with Ofsted since July 2018.

Due to COVID 19, at the request of the Secretary of State, we suspended all routine inspections of social care providers carried out under the social care common inspection framework (SCCIF) on 17 March 2020. We returned to routine SCCIF inspections on 12 April 2021.

We last visited this setting on 18 February 2021 to carry out a monitoring visit. The report is published on the Ofsted website.

Inspection dates: 8 and 9 December 2021

Overall experiences and progress of children and young people, taking into account **outstanding**

How well children and young people are helped and protected **good**

The effectiveness of leaders and managers **outstanding**

The children's home provides highly effective services that consistently exceed the standards of good. The actions of the children's home contribute to significantly improved outcomes and positive experiences for children and young people who need help, protection and care.

Date of last inspection: 7 January 2020

Overall judgement at last inspection: good

Enforcement action since last inspection: none

Recent inspection history

Inspection date	Inspection type	Inspection judgement
07/01/2020	Full	Good
14/03/2019	Interim	Sustained effectiveness
08/05/2018	Full	Good

Inspection judgements

Overall experiences and progress of children and young people: outstanding

Children receive individualised, child-centred care from an experienced and consistent staff team. Staff have an in-depth understanding of the children's past experiences and how these have affected their development, behaviours and the risks they may pose to themselves or others. Staff do not define children by their past but look at their potential. Staff tailor the support they provide to meet each child's needs. This helps children to develop while reducing the risks to the child and others. As a result, the progress of children is exceptional.

As a result of the progress made, some children have returned home to live with their families or moved on to foster care. For example, staff have successfully supported one child to be able to regulate his emotions and engage in his classes at school for longer periods of time. As a result, this child now attends a mainstream school and has returned home to the care of his family.

Education is promoted by staff who help children to understand the importance and benefits of education. They provide children with a wide range of opportunities and individualised support, which have helped children to engage in their lessons and to progress. As a result, children have achieved good exam results, started apprenticeships and are aspirational about their futures.

Staff have excellent links with children's education and therapy professionals. Staff work closely with them to develop comprehensive plans that put children at the centre. Therapy at the home is well planned, and is a crucial part of the care provided to children that helps them to progress. This collaborative working means that children receive consistent care.

Staff actively encourage children to participate in activities away from the home and to make new friends. Children take part in an extensive range of activities that include cadets, running clubs, rugby clubs, parkour groups and going to the gym. Children have also undertaken volunteering opportunities in the local community. As a result, children feel less isolated and improve their confidence and self-esteem.

Staff are exceptionally creative in providing activities for the children. This was especially important during times when they could not go to their usual clubs due to COVID-19. There have been cooking and bake-off competitions and end-of-term concerts. As restrictions lifted, staff put on a festival, with activities such as an obstacle course and a visit from a pizza van. All the children have been on holiday and were able to participate in numerous outdoor activities. Consequently, children have been able to try out new things and develop new skills.

Children's wishes are listened to and acted upon. For example, the children requested a pet for the home. Staff helped children to understand the

responsibilities of caring for an animal and considered the best type of pet for the home. As a result, children now help to look after a number of chickens and collect their eggs most days.

Staff are extremely committed and dedicated to the care of the children. When one child had COVID-19 and had to isolate, a member of staff isolated with him for the whole 10 days. This helped the child cope with the isolation and meant he received consistent care and support from someone he knew well.

How well children and young people are helped and protected: good

Staff develop comprehensive risk assessments and behaviour plans which help to keep children safe. Staff are not risk averse and carefully consider how children can participate and engage with each other and the wider community with as few restrictions as possible. Consequently, children are able to take part in activities and engage in the wider community as any other child would.

Managers regularly test staff's knowledge, in team meetings and in supervision, of children's plans and the risks to and from children. As a result, managers are satisfied that staff fully understand the risks and know what action they need to take to protect children.

Staff and therapists work together to help children to understand their past traumas and behaviours. This work and the ongoing support from staff helps children to learn how to keep themselves safe and manage their emotions. Many children progress to such a point that incidents are dramatically reduced. The need for physical intervention is rare and, day to day, children cope with the demands placed upon them.

Children rarely go missing from the home but when they do, staff take prompt action and will go above and beyond in trying to locate them. On one occasion, staff followed a child for a considerable amount of time to ensure that the child did not come to harm. As a result, children are kept safe and returned to the home as soon as possible.

Children are cared for by small groups of consistent staff. This means children build trusting relationships with them and feel safe in talking to staff about their past. When children have disclosed information, staff have supported children and reported this appropriately. Consequently, children feel listened to and believed.

Children are actively involved in decisions. They know how to complain and will speak up if not happy. There is a clear open-door policy and children feel comfortable to go and talk to adults if they need to. As a result, children can raise concerns and worries, knowing the staff will listen and take action.

During the inspection, the inspector noticed several fire doors being propped open with door wedges. This could mean that if there was a fire, the fire could spread and pose a risk to those living at the home.

Some areas of the home require extra cleaning and maintenance. One of the freezers was dirty, some shower-room tiles were stained and there was some paint flaking in the bathrooms. This does not create a safe, homely environment.

The effectiveness of leaders and managers: outstanding

The home is managed by a committed, child-focused practitioner who puts the children at the centre of everything she does. She is a good role model for staff and sets high expectations for herself and the staff team. As a result, staff are motivated and committed to excellent care. This is demonstrated in the high-quality care provided to children and in the progress they make.

The manager knows the home and children well. She is knowledgeable about the children's needs and risks and has implemented current good practice across the care delivered to children. The manager and staff have successfully managed the risks to children and the risks they may pose to others, so that the children are able to have the opportunities that all children should. As a result, the children have thrived and flourished.

The manager's collaborative approach means that children's moves from the home are well planned. The manager works closely with children's families when the plan is for a child to return home. The holistic work carried out by the manager and support from the therapy team meant that the child had a successful move from the home.

The manager is proactive in developing her team. Staff have many training and learning opportunities. These include the development of staff to senior roles, supporting staff's learning in team meetings and supervision, and encouraging staff to undertake additional qualifications. As a result, the team is motivated to improve their own professional development and to provide highly skilled care to the children.

The manager has excellent monitoring systems in place. These clearly show trends and patterns and how any shortfalls identified are put into the home's improvement plan and actioned. Consequently, the service is continually improving the care given to children.

Children are helped by the manager and staff to join in with the decisions that are made about them. Children are at the centre of all decisions made. They are consulted before meetings, attend when appropriate and they are always given feedback. When things cannot happen, it is explained why. As a result, children feel valued and respected.

The manager is not afraid to challenge other professionals when she feels it is in the best interests of children. For example, she challenged the police over a delay in coming to see a child as it was causing him great anxiety. As a result, the police promptly carried out their visit.

The manager shares her learning with other homes operated by the same provider. For example, she has shown how trackers and chronologies could be better used to demonstrate children's progress. Consequently, this has improved other homes' systems of monitoring and the care delivered to children across the wider organisation.

What does the children's home need to do to improve?

Statutory requirements

This section sets out the actions that the registered person(s) must take to meet the Care Standards Act 2000, Children's Homes (England) Regulations 2015 and the 'Guide to the children's homes regulations, including the quality standards'. The registered person(s) must comply within the given timescales.

Requirement	Due date
The protection of children standard is that children are protected from harm and enabled to keep themselves safe. In particular, the standard in paragraph (1) requires the registered person to ensure— that the premises used for the purposes of the home are designed, furnished and maintained so as to protect each child from avoidable hazards to the child's health. (Regulation 12 (1) (2)(d)) This specifically relates to doors not being propped open with door wedges.	28 January 2022

Recommendation

- The registered person should ensure that all areas of the home, including bathrooms and fridges, are kept clean and maintained to a good standard.
(‘Guide to the children's homes regulations, including the quality standards’, page 14, paragraph 3.3)

Information about this inspection

Inspectors have looked closely at the experiences and progress of children and young people, using the ‘Social care common inspection framework’. This inspection was carried out under the Care Standards Act 2000 to assess the effectiveness of the service, how it meets the core functions of the service as set out in legislation, and to consider how well it complies with the Children's Homes (England) Regulations 2015 and the ‘Guide to the children's homes regulations, including the quality standards’.

Children's home details

Unique reference number: 1257074

Provision sub-type: Children's home

Registered provider: Branas Isaf (Holdings) Limited

Registered provider address: Branas Isaf (Holdings) Limited, Metropolitan House, 3 Darkes Lane, Potters Bar EN6 1AG

Responsible individual: Kathleen Jones

Registered manager: Rebecca Potter

Inspector

Debbie Bond, Social Care Inspector

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