

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 years, 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 home has a new manager, who is suitably experienced and has applied to register with Ofsted.

Inspection dates: 15 and 16 January 2024

Overall experiences and progress of children and young people, taking into account	good
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How well children and young people are helped and protected	good
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The effectiveness of leaders and managers	good
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The children's home provides effective services that meet the requirements for good.

Date of last inspection: 15 March 2023

Overall judgement at last inspection: good

Enforcement action since last inspection: none

Recent inspection history

Inspection date	Inspection type	Inspection judgement
15/03/2023	Full	Good
08/12/2021	Full	Outstanding
07/01/2020	Full	Good
14/03/2019	Interim	Sustained effectiveness

Inspection judgements

Overall experiences and progress of children and young people: good

Since the last inspection, three children have moved in to the home and four children have moved out. At the time of this inspection, seven children were living at the home.

All children are making progress with their education. Positive communication with the children's teachers ensures that children feel supported and that barriers to learning are overcome.

Staff support children to take part in a variety of activities. These include crochet clubs, football clubs, and attending the gym and the local youth club. In addition, children are encouraged to take part in charity work. Children recently raised over £250 for a cancer charity and completed a men's mental health fundraiser. Taking part in these activities means that children are having fun and making long-lasting memories.

Children's care needs and experiences are understood by managers and staff. However, children's written care plans do not record how children's cultural needs should be met or consider set targets and how staff should support children in meeting these. This could lead to inconsistencies in the care received, and does not ensure that staff have all the required information.

Children are supported with their health needs and remain in good health. Qualified therapists support children and staff to ensure that the therapeutic model of care is embedded into practice. Children engage with weekly direct therapy sessions. This enables them to explore and understand their childhood experiences. As a result, children's emotional and psychological well-being significantly improve.

Staff are committed to establishing trusting relationships with children. Staff complete regular sessions with children to discuss their feelings and behaviours. The newly appointed manager has introduced monthly children's meetings. This is an opportunity for children to provide feedback about the home and to influence change.

Staff understand the importance of helping children to see their family and friends. Staff proactively keep in touch with those who are important to children, and are flexible and creative when organising the time that they spend together. This helps children to maintain a sense of identity and connection to their loved ones.

The home is furnished and decorated to a good standard. The environment encourages children to feel comfortable, and children enjoy having the opportunity to care for their own pets. There are plans for additional refurbishment work and there is an ongoing programme of maintenance.

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

During the inspection, children said that they feel safe, and staff demonstrated a good understanding of children's risks. However, children's risk assessments contain historical information and lack focus or clear strategies for staff to follow. This lack of clarity may lead to inconsistencies in staff practice, and does not reflect proactive risk management.

Since the last inspection, physical intervention has only been used once. The intervention was proportionate, and staff and children's views were considered. However, the record of the intervention is not clear on the time that it started or the location. The manager had not identified this prior to inspection. However, they recognised the need to complete an upskilling session with staff to improve recording.

The managers do not always ensure that known and emerging concerns are explored with children and staff. For example, when a child told staff that during a missing episode he accepted transport from an unknown adult, staff did not explore this fully with the child during the reflective discussion. In addition, when staff reflected that an intervention used was not effective, this was not discussed with staff to identify alternative strategies. This is a missed opportunity to ensure that the correct support is being provided to children.

Children are supported by staff to learn independence skills through an individualised and structured programme. Staff complete learning sessions to help children to develop budgeting skills and learn how to cook. In addition, children are supported to successfully gain part-time employment. This means that children are developing their confidence in the home and the wider community.

Children are supported during incidents of self-harm. Staff help children to reflect on their thoughts and feelings and discuss alternative behaviours. For example, when a child was feeling overwhelmed with education, staff introduced additional homework support to reduce anxieties. As a result, children's ability to manage their emotions has improved.

Children's bedroom doors and external doors have an alarm system that operates at night. Since the last inspection, managers have implemented risk assessments to reflect children's individual needs. However, managers have not consulted with children to help them to understand the purpose of monitoring devices. This is a missed opportunity to help children to understand risk and influence their day-to-day care.

New staff are recruited safely, and appropriate checks are completed. There are no concerns in relation to safer recruitment practices.

The effectiveness of leaders and managers: good

Since the last inspection, there has been a change in the day-to-day management of the home. The provider appointed a new manager; however, they withdrew from the post after submitting their application. This manager's application was not submitted to Ofsted in line with regulatory timescales. A new manager is now in charge of the home. She has applied for registration with Ofsted and is committed to making positive changes. The new manager has a good understanding of the home's strengths and areas for development.

Since the last inspection, managers have identified that there have been several changes in the staff team. To ensure consistency and boost morale, managers have arranged team-building sessions and celebrate staff achievements through recognitions, including 'staff member of the month'. Staff say that they feel valued, and morale has improved. Staff speak positively about the new manager and the changes they have made since starting in post.

The new manager has improved communication with professionals by introducing weekly calls and written reports. A social worker said, 'Staff understand children's needs and are consistent and thoughtful.'

Since the previous inspection, staff have received further training. This includes mandatory training and training that is specific to children's presenting needs. To complement the training, the manager liaises with the in-house therapist to gain further advice. Children help staff to understand their needs. One child created and delivered a training course about autism. This has helped to increase staff knowledge.

The quality of the individual supervision that staff receive is variable. The manager has not ensured that all staff members working in the home have been provided with practice-related supervision. Furthermore, not all staff have received an annual appraisal.

The manager has not ensured that children's case files contain up-to-date information. In some cases, there is evidence of the managers requesting this information. However, the information is still not available. As a result, staff do not always have the information that they need to coordinate care.

To improve management oversight, the new manager is changing the monitoring tools. The manager hopes that these changes will ensure that there is a prompt response to shortfalls in practice.

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 staff— assess whether each child is at risk of harm, taking into account information in the child's relevant plans and, if necessary, make arrangements to reduce the risk of any harm to the child. (Regulation 12 (1) (2)(a)(i)) This relates to ensuring that children's risks are accurately reflected in their written documentation and that risk assessments clearly advise staff on how to respond to risk.	12 February 2024
The leadership and management standard is that the registered person enables, inspires and leads a culture in relation to the children's home that— helps children aspire to fulfil their potential. In particular, the standard in paragraph (1) requires the registered person to— understand the impact that the quality of care provided in the home is having on the progress and experiences of each child and use this understanding to inform the development of the quality of care provided in the home. The registered person should also use monitoring and review systems to make continuous improvements in the quality of care provided in the home. (Regulation 13 (1)(a) (2)(f)) This specifically relates to the registered manager ensuring that there are effective systems in place to monitor and review incidents to understand the support provided to	12 February 2024

children by staff and to inform the development of the care provided.	
The registered person must ensure that all employees— receive practice-related supervision by a person with appropriate experience; and have their performance and fitness to perform their roles appraised at least once every year. (Regulation 33 (4)(b)(c)) This specifically relates to managers ensuring that all staff working in the home receive practice-related supervision and an annual appraisal.	12 February 2024
The registered person must maintain records (“case records”) for each child which— include the information and documents listed in Schedule 3 in relation to each child; are kept up to date. (Regulation 36 (1)(a)(b)) This specifically relates to ensuring that children’s up-to-date care plans and education plans are in place.	12 February 2024

Recommendations

- The registered person should ensure that children are consulted regularly on their views about the home’s care, to inform and support continued improvement in the quality of care proved. For example, the manager should consult with the children in the house about the home’s monitoring systems. (‘Guide to the Children’s Homes Regulations, including the quality standards’, page 22, paragraph 4.11)
- The registered person should ensure that records of restraint enable the registered person and staff to review the use of control, discipline, and restraint to identify effective practice and respond promptly where issues emerge. (‘Guide to the Children’s Homes Regulations, including the quality standards’, page 29, paragraph 9.59)
- The registered person should ensure that staff are familiar with the home’s policies on record-keeping and understand the importance of careful, objective and clear recording. Information should be recorded in a way that will be helpful to the child and take into account any relevant plans. (‘Guide to the Children’s Homes Regulations, including the quality standards’, page 62, paragraph 14.4)

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) Ltd

Registered provider address: 5th Floor, Metropolitan House, 3 Darkes Lane,
Hertfordshire EN6 1AG

Responsible individual: Kathleen Jones

Registered manager: Kirsty Nelson

Inspectors

Sophie Hills, Social Care Inspector
Stacie Sharpe, Social Care Inspector

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