

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.

Inspection dates: 15 and 16 March 2023

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

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

The effectiveness of leaders and managers **good**

The children's home provides effective services that meet the requirements for good.

Date of last inspection: 8 December 2021

Overall judgement at last inspection: outstanding

Enforcement action since last inspection: none

Recent inspection history

Inspection date	Inspection type	Inspection judgement
08/12/2021	Full	Outstanding
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: good

At the time of inspection, there were eight children living in the home. Children receive individualised care from a child-centred staff team whose members know them well. The supportive environment of the home has enabled children to develop their self-confidence and self-esteem.

Children who were previously not engaged in school have been encouraged to re-engage with education. Children attend either the on-site school or an alternative provision. School staff and care staff work well together and understand children's learning needs. As a result, children make progress and are provided with consistent support.

Staff encourage children to have new experiences. This includes working in the community and attending local clubs, such as boxing and bowls. Where required, staff observe these activities to monitor responses in the community and to ensure that children feel supported. Activities encourage children to develop new interests and to have fun.

Clinical support is used to develop an understanding of children's needs. Children attend weekly therapy sessions and clinical assessments help to inform care. This practice helps children to understand their past traumas and behaviours.

Staff recognise the importance of children maintaining contact with family. Staff support the children when visiting people who are important to them and send weekly care summaries to parents. This enables parents to still feel involved in the everyday care of their children. One parent said that the staff have helped her build on her relationship with her son.

Overall, the home is welcoming. However, at the time of the inspection, some aspects appeared grubby and in need of cleaning. In addition, children's bedrooms required attention. For example, not all children's bedrooms were personalised and some children did not have washing baskets and instead kept dirty clothes on the floor. In addition, one child told the inspector that the mattress on his bed was uncomfortable. This had not been identified by staff before the inspection, despite the child layering his mattress with a duvet cover. During the inspection, the staff and manager made efforts to improve the environment and some items were replaced.

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

The staff have a good knowledge and understanding of the children's vulnerabilities, risks and needs. Highly detailed care plans combined with staff vigilance ensure that children are kept safe. Furthermore, carefully assessed staffing levels ensure that children receive appropriate support in the home.

Physical intervention is used when needed to keep everyone safe. Staff ensure that children are supported with a debrief following an incident and that appropriate professionals are informed. The manager's oversight of the use of intervention informs staff practice.

Incidents of children going missing are rare. Staff are proactive when children go missing. Staff will search for children and liaise with other agencies to ensure that children are located safe and well. Furthermore, staff are supportive when children return and offer them the opportunity to reflect on their choices.

Staff follow a daily points system to recognise children's achievements and plan activities. For example, high points will mean the children are offered a wider range of weekend activities. However, staff do not consistently undertake meaningful reflective work with children if they do not meet these set targets. This is a missed opportunity for children to learn about their behaviours.

Staff keep unhealthy food locked in an office to prevent children accessing it. This practice fails to help children understand what constitutes a healthy, balanced diet and detracts from the homely environment.

Medication is safely stored and administered. Staff consult with health professionals when changes are required or additional support is needed, for example when changing the medication for a child. In addition, if there are medication errors, the manager takes swift action to understand the reasons why to prevent further occurrence.

Alarms are used on all children's bedroom doors at night and also on the external doors of the five residential homes. Managers complete an assessment of children's needs when they move into the home to support the requirement of this measure. However, this has not been updated to reflect the current risk and need. As a result, the alarms may be being used unnecessarily.

The effectiveness of leaders and managers: good

There is a suitably qualified manager in post who has been registered with Ofsted since June 2018. There are plans for changes to leadership and a new manager has been appointed who is applying for registration with Ofsted.

The staff group in the home is stable. Staff receive regular supervision sessions and ongoing training. Staff speak highly of the leadership in the home.

Multi-agency working is effective. The manager has sought additional advice when required and professionals commented about the progress children make. One professional told the inspector: 'The staff are brilliant; the progress [name of child] has made is a miracle.'

The registered manager ensures that staff who are recruited to work in the home are subject to all the necessary checks. This helps to ensure that staff who work at the home are safe to do so.

Although children on the whole receive individual care, the registered manager had not followed up on actions set within a child's health assessment. As a result, this practice may have an impact on staff fully understanding children's needs and areas for development.

The care planning arrangements are not taking place within the timescales set by the home's statement of purpose. For example, children's therapeutic assessments do not take place within 16 weeks. This was not picked up by managers and leads to unclear expectations.

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 quality and purpose of care standard is that children receive care from staff who— understand the children's home's overall aims and the outcomes it seeks to achieve for children; use this understanding to deliver care that meets children's needs and supports them to fulfil their potential. In particular, the standard in paragraph (1) requires the registered person to— ensure that staff— provide personalised care that meets each child's needs, as recorded in the child's relevant plans, taking account of the child's background; and ensure that the premises used for the purposes of the home are designed and furnished so as to— meet the needs of each child; and enable each child to participate in the daily life of the home. (Regulation 6 (1)(a)(b) (2)(b)(iv)(c)(i)(ii)) In particular, managers should follow up any information within children's plans and ensure that care is being delivered in a way that supports the child's identified needs. In addition, the manager must ensure that the home and children's bedrooms are appropriately decorated, maintained and clean.	10 May 2023
The positive relationships standard is that children are helped to develop, and to benefit from, relationships based on (a) mutual respect and trust; (b) an understanding about acceptable behaviour.	10 May 2023

In particular, the standard in paragraph (1) requires the registered person to ensure— that staff— encourage each child to take responsibility for the child’s behaviour, in accordance with the child’s age and understanding. (Regulation 11 (1)(a)(b) (2)(a)(iii)) This specifically relates to the home’s behaviour management system supporting children to learn about their targets and behaviours. In addition, food should not be locked away from children to prevent access.	
The registered person may only use devices for the monitoring or surveillance of children if— the monitoring or surveillance is for the purpose of safeguarding and promoting the welfare of the child concerned, or other children. (Regulation 24 (1)(a)) This specifically relates to ensuring that door alarms are only used as set out in a child’s agreed risk assessment.	10 May 2023

Recommendation

- The registered person must lead and manage the home in a way that delivers the ethos, outcomes and approach set out in the home’s statement of purpose. (‘Guide to the Children’s Homes Regulations, including the quality standards’, page 52, paragraph 10.4)

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: Branäs Isaf (Holdings) Limited

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

Responsible individual: Kathleen Jones

Registered manager: Rebecca Potter

Inspectors

Sophie Hills, Social Care Inspector
Nicola Lownds, Social Care Inspector

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