

Children's home inspection – Full

Inspection date	01/11/2016
Unique reference number	SC068032
Type of inspection	Full
Provision subtype	Children's home
Registered provider	Branas Isaf Personal Development Centre Limited
Registered provider address	5th Floor, Metropolitan House, 3 Darkes Lane, Potters Bar, Hertfordshire, EN6 1AG

Responsible individual	Kathleen Jones
Registered manager	Kevin Reade
Inspector	Jo Stephenson

Inspection date	01/11/2016
Previous inspection judgement	Sustained effectiveness
Enforcement action since last inspection	None
This inspection	
The overall experiences and progress of children and young people living in the home	Good
The children's home provides effective services that meet the requirements for good.	
How well children and young people are helped and protected	Good
The impact and effectiveness of leaders and managers	Good

SC068032

Summary of findings

The children's home provision is good because:

- Staff protect young people from harm because they devise bespoke and detailed risk assessments.
- Internal care plans provide young people with a detailed overview of the aims of the placement and their progress to date. This supports young people's development.
- The registered manager works in partnership with a range of other professional agencies. This means that young people benefit from integrated care and support.
- Young people learn necessary independent living skills because of living in this home. Staff support young people through their transition into adulthood.
- Young people benefit from strong and appropriate relationships with staff. These help young people to form suitable relationships with others.
- There are some areas for improvement. These include the review of the use of bedroom door alarms, making sure that statutory care plans are available in young people's case files and consistently prompting a healthy lifestyle.

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

Statutory requirements

This section sets out the actions which must be taken so that the registered person(s) meets 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
10. The health and well-being standard The health and well-being standard is that– (1)(c) children are helped to lead healthy lifestyles.	30/12/2016
No measure of control or discipline which is unreasonable may be used in relation to any child. This specifically relates to the use of cigarettes and tobacco as part of behaviour management in the home. (Regulation 19(1))	30/12/2016
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; and the monitoring or surveillance is no more intrusive than necessary, having regard to the child's need for privacy. (Regulation 24(1)(a)(d))	30/12/2016
If the Regulatory Reform (Fire Safety) Order 2005(a) applies to the home the registered person must ensure that the requirements of that Order and any regulations made under it, except for article 23 (duties of employees), are complied with in respect of the home. This specifically relates to timely repairs to fire doors. (Regulation 25(2)(b))	30/12/2016
The registered person must ensure that all employees undertake appropriate continuing professional development; and receive practice-related supervision by a person with appropriate experience. (Regulation 33(4)(a)(b))	30/12/2016
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. (Regulation 36(1)(a))	30/12/2016

Recommendations

To improve the quality and standards of care further the service should take account of the following recommendation:

- The registered manager will consider what information or data recorded in the home will form part of the evidence base for their analysis and conclusions. There is no expectation that the registered person will review the home against every part of the Quality Standards every six months – registered persons should use their professional judgement to decide which factors to focus on. The review should enable the registered person to identify areas of strength and possible weakness in the home's care, which will be captured in the written report. The report should clearly identify any actions required for the next 6 months of delivery within the home and how those actions will be addressed. The whole review process and the resulting report should be used as a tool for continuous improvement in the home. ('Guide to the children's homes regulations including the quality standards', page 65, paragraph 15.4)

Full report

Information about this children's home

This service provides care and accommodation for up to six young people with emotional and/or behavioural difficulties. The service provides single-sex occupancy. A private provider owns and operates the home.

Recent inspection history

Inspection date	Inspection type	Inspection judgement
29/03/2016	Interim	Sustained effectiveness
11/08/2015	Full	Good
05/03/2015	Interim	Sustained effectiveness
10/07/2014	Full	Good

Inspection judgements

	Judgement grade
The overall experiences and progress of children and young people living in the home	Good
Young people make good progress in all areas of their development, and their experience of living in the home is positive. Internal care planning processes and arrangements are very effective. Staff devise placement plans that demonstrate young people's progress, capture their achievements and review their personal goals and targets. Managers, staff and allocated social workers review these plans in partnership with allocated therapists. These specialists provide young people with additional emotional support and interventions when required. This approach to care planning means that young people receive tailored support that promotes their welfare and personal development. However, the case files for some young people do not include all necessary documentation, such as up-to-date statutory care plans. This shortfall potentially means that internal care plans may not include the longer-terms aims of the placing authorities. Staff encourage young people to voice their wishes and opinions during one-to-one sessions and by attending their statutory reviews. Young people enjoy positive relationships with staff, and these good relationships help to facilitate young people's participation in these sessions. Records of these sessions and minutes of review meetings demonstrate that young people are involved in the decisions made about their care. One young person said, 'Decisions are made with me and not just about me. I think that's the way things should be'. Young people attend primary healthcare appointments, such as dentist appointments, when required. Staff encourage young people to be responsible for arranging these appointments as part of their move towards independence. However, staff do not continually support young people to maintain a healthy lifestyle. For example, when young people smoke, staff do not provide young people with appropriate guidance relating to the long-term affect smoking will have on their health and well-being. Furthermore, there are occasions when staff use 'smoking bans' to penalise young people's negative behaviours. This implies that smoking tobacco or cigarettes is a privilege. The use of this sanction is unacceptable and does not give young people a clear message about the dangers associated with smoking. Attendance in education is generally good. Staff work in partnership with local colleges and specialist learning provisions to secure suitable education placements for young people. This means that young people acknowledge the importance of continuing their education and understand the positive impact that this has on their social and emotional development and their future career options.	

Providing young people with the skills that they need for semi-independent or independent living is a considerable strength of the service. Under the supervision of staff, young people learn to manage a weekly budget and shop for and prepare their own meals. Staff liaise with allocated social workers and assigned therapists to identify factors that may potentially hinder young people's transition to adulthood. These factors include feelings of isolation that are often associated with living alone, and the practicalities of running a household. Identifying these issues means that independent living plans are personalised to young people's individual needs and skills. This increases the likely success of young people's future placements.

Staff retain close links with young people's families when appropriate. They use these transparent and open relationships to support and facilitate regular contact between young people and those who are important to them. This means that young people are not isolated from their families or friends, and this promotes their feelings of inclusion, self-esteem and confidence. One young person said, 'My family are the most important thing in the world to me, and staff help me keep in touch with them and not fall out.'

	Judgement grade
How well children and young people are helped and protected	Good
Managers and staff work in partnership with various external agencies, such as social workers and specialist police teams, to devise detailed and realistic risk assessments. These risk assessments balance a proportionate approach to managing identified risks with the need for young people to learn to take responsibility for their own actions and behaviours, as they move towards adulthood. For example, young people's participation in one-to-one sessions relating to their previous behaviours and actions is a consideration when staff review internal risk assessments. Young people are encouraged to acknowledge the negative impact that their actions may have on others and on their own social and emotional development. This assists staff and other professionals to evaluate young people's progress and make sure that reviewed risk assessments continue to reflect young people's needs, keeping them and others safe from harm. Incidents of young people going missing from the home are rare. On these occasions, staff immediately notify allocated police agencies and search the local area. Staff and community police officers complete personalised missing-from-home 'trigger plans' for each young person. These plans highlight individual young people's risks and vulnerabilities, including the risks of child sexual exploitation, and detail strategies to reduce these risks. This integrated approach to managing these episodes promotes young people's safety and welfare.	

Staff complete regular training in the use of physical restraint and de-escalation techniques. Records of physical restraint demonstrate that the need to use this measure of control has continued to reduce since the last full inspection. Positive relationships between young people and staff mean that de-escalation techniques are effective. Staff continually encourage young people to take responsibility for their behaviour. This enables young people to explore alternative ways of managing their frustrations, such as taking time away from other people, to help them to regain control of their actions. One young person said, 'I was kicking off all the time before coming here but now I'm more grown up and I walk away. I'm more in control.'

Managers and staff use bedroom door alarms to monitor young people's movement around the home. The registered manager states that this restriction is required to safeguard young people. However, the need for this surveillance is not risk assessed and is custom and practice in the home. All young people are subject to this restriction, regardless of the risks they may pose to others. For some young people this is an unnecessary intrusion on their privacy.

The size and layout of the home mean that the internal environment is institutional in parts. However, staff consult with young people to create 'homely' communal areas for young people to relax and socialise in. Staff regularly update health and safety records and complete fire safety checks. These records highlight outstanding concerns that may affect young people's safety. During this inspection, a number of fire doors required repairs. Although the registered manager took immediate action to address this shortfall, the failure to repair fire doors in a timely manner potentially compromises young people's safety.

	Judgement grade
The impact and effectiveness of leaders and managers	Good
The manager has been registered with Ofsted since March 2011. He has a number of years' relevant experience of working in and managing residential children's homes and holds the necessary higher-level qualifications required for this role. The registered manager has taken sufficient action to address the one recommendation raised at the last inspection. This was to provide staff with training in relation to deprivation of liberty assessments. Although staff can now access this training, the majority have yet to complete this. Furthermore, staff have not completed training relating to radicalisation and bullying. This means that staff may not have all of the skills that they need to support the young people. Young people make good progress because the registered manager prioritises their	

needs. He retains a detailed overview of young people's risks and vulnerabilities and tracks their progress and achievements against the aims and objectives of the placing authorities. This means that young people's progress is measured, and this supports their development.

Relationships with other services are positive. The registered manager acknowledges the importance of partnership working with other agencies and external professionals. This collaborative approach means that the service meets the aims and objectives of the statement of purpose. Feedback from social workers and other professionals is positive. One social worker said, 'The commitment and dedication of the manager and the staff is commendable and it's the reason that [name of young person] has made such excellent progress.'

Staff say that the registered manager supports them in their role and that during regular staff meetings he encourages them to reflect on their performance as a team. However, some staff do not receive regular formal supervision. This means that not all staff have their practice appraised to confirm that they have the ability to meet young people's specific needs. Although this potentially hinders young people's progress, all staff hold relevant and recognised qualifications in children's social care. This demonstrates that staff have a suitable skill base to work with young people.

Monitoring tools currently used by the registered manager do not enable him to evaluate sufficiently the quality of care provided by the service, or analyse the impact that this has on young people's progress. The registered manager is unable to identify clearly the strengths and weaknesses of the home because this is not the focus of the monitoring report. This means that the registered manager does not use identified patterns or trends to devise suitable action plans that will support continuous improvements in the home.

What the inspection judgements mean

The experiences and progress of children and young people are at the centre of the inspection. Inspectors will use their professional judgement to determine the weight and significance of their findings in this respect. The judgements included in the report are made against 'Inspection of children's homes: framework for inspection'.

An **outstanding** children's home provides highly effective services that contribute to significantly improved outcomes for children and young people who need help and protection and care. Their progress exceeds expectations and is sustained over time.

A **good** children's home provides effective services that help, protect and care for children and young people and have their welfare safeguarded and promoted.

In a children's home that **requires improvement**, there are no widespread or serious failures that create or leave children being harmed or at risk of harm. The welfare of children looked after is safeguarded and promoted. Minimum requirements are in place. However, the children's home is not yet delivering good protection, help and care for children and young people.

A children's home that is **inadequate** is providing services where there are widespread or serious failures that create or leave children and young people being harmed or at risk of harm or that result in children looked after not having their welfare safeguarded and promoted.

Information about this inspection

Inspectors have looked closely at the experiences and progress of children and young people living in the children's home. Inspectors considered the quality of work and the difference that adults make to the lives of children and young people. They read case files, watched how professional staff work with children, young people and each other and discussed the effectiveness of help and care given to children and young people. Wherever possible, they talked to children, young people and their families. In addition the inspectors have tried to understand what the children's home knows about how well it is performing, how well it is doing and what difference it is making for the children and young people who it is trying to help, protect and look after.

This inspection was carried out under the Care Standards Act 2000 to assess the effectiveness of the service 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'.

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