

SC068032

Registered provider: Branas Isaf (Holdings) Limited

Full inspection

Inspected under the social care common inspection framework

Information about this children's home

This home provides care and accommodation for single-sex occupancy for up to six young people who have emotional and/or behavioural difficulties. Young people display or have displayed harmful or concerning behaviours. A private provider owns and operates this home.

Inspection dates: 6 to 7 November 2017

Overall experiences and progress of children and young people, taking into account **requires improvement to be good**

How well children and young people are helped and protected **requires improvement to be good**

The effectiveness of leaders and managers **inadequate**

The children's home is not yet delivering good help and care for children and young people. However, there are no serious or widespread failures that result in their welfare not being safeguarded or promoted.

Date of last inspection: 23 February 2017

Overall judgement at last inspection: sustained effectiveness

Enforcement action since last inspection:

None

Key findings from this inspection

This children's home requires improvement to be good because:

- The home has been without a registered manager since May 2017. Although a manager is in post, she is not yet registered with Ofsted.
- Young people's case files do not include all required information and documentation. This limits the effectiveness of the care planning process.
- Young people do not consistently benefit from personalised care that reflects their individual progress.
- Young people do not benefit from sufficient or effective exit planning as they prepare to leave the home. This hinders their journey towards independence.
- The new manager does not seek the views and opinions of young people in her review of the quality of care provided by the service.
- Staff do not make sure that information and documentation are appropriately stored to maintain confidentiality.
- Some parts of the home require refurbishment and redecoration to create a comfortable and welcoming environment.
- Managers do not retain suitable records in relation to complaints.

The children's home's strengths

- The new manager has made significant improvements to monitoring and review systems. These now provide an accurate overview of the strengths of the service and the areas for improvement.
- Staff and managers ensure that young people's education is a priority. They establish effective professional relationships with a varied range of specialist learning providers and colleges.

Recent inspection history

Inspection date	Inspection type	Inspection judgement
23/02/2017	Interim	Sustained effectiveness
01/11/2016	Full	Good
29/03/2016	Interim	Sustained effectiveness
11/08/2015	Full	Good

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; and - 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. (Regulation 6(1)(a)(b)(2)(b)(iv)(c)(i))	31/01/2018
The children's views, wishes and feelings standard is that children receive care from staff who engage with them In particular, the standard in paragraph (1) requires the registered person to ensure that staff— regularly consult children, and seek their feedback, about the	31/01/2018

quality of the home's care. (Regulation 7(1)(b)(2)(a)(iv))	
The care planning standard is that children receive effectively planned care in or through the children's home. In particular, the standard in paragraph (1) requires the registered person to ensure that arrangements are in place to— plan for, and help, each child to prepare to leave the home. (Regulation 14(1)(a)(2)(b)(iii))	31/01/2018
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; and are kept up to date. Case records must be kept in a secure place after the child has ceased to be accommodated in the home. (Regulation 36(1)(a)(b)(2)(d))	31/01/2018
The registered person must ensure that a record is made of any complaint, the action taken in response, and the outcome of any investigation. (Regulation 39(3))	31/01/2018

Recommendations

- Ensure that children are encouraged by staff to see the home's records as 'living documents' supporting them to view and contribute to the record in a way that reflects their voice on a regular basis. ('Guide to the children's homes regulations including the quality standards', page 58, paragraph 11.19)

Inspection judgements

Overall experiences and progress of children and young people: requires improvement to be good

Young people make progress in some areas of their development. Young people benefit from the delivery of bespoke therapeutic intervention programmes. Staff work with the in-house multi-disciplinary therapy team to identify young people's emotional and psychological health needs. This partnership approach enables young people to reflect on their personal circumstances, previous behaviours and risk factors. As a result, young people start to take responsibility for their actions and conduct. However, staff do not clearly record the progress that young people make as a direct result of their engagement with the therapy team. For example, staff do not use this information to review and revise internal care plans or to shape more general one-to-one sessions to support young people's wider growth and development. This is a missed opportunity to completely personalise the care planning process for each young person.

Staff do not ensure that young people's case files include all necessary information and documentation. This shortfall is outstanding from the last inspection in February 2017.

This undermines the ability of staff to provide care and support that mirror the aims and objectives of the placing authorities. This is because they are unable to confirm what these are. In addition, staff do not review and update relevant support plans in a timely manner. For example, staff last reviewed the independent living skills plan for one young person in October 2016. This means that the extent of his progress and his journey to achievement are lost. The effectiveness of internal care planning processes are further compromised by a lack of structure in case files. Young people say that they do not read their case files because 'they don't make any sense'. As a result, young people do not consider these to be relevant to them and do not take the time to contribute their views or wishes.

Young people mostly enjoy positive and respectful relationships with staff. One young person said, 'The very best thing about being here is the staff. They don't judge us.' Nevertheless, staff do not utilise these positive relationships to seek young people's opinions regarding the quality of care that they receive.

Managers and staff are passionate about promoting young people's education. This is a significant improvement since the last inspection in February 2017. At that time, not all young people had suitable school or college placements. The manager and staff now have strong and effective professional relationships with a wide range of learning providers, colleges and education agencies. Staff help young people to review their ambitions and career choices as they move from compulsory education to further educational opportunities. As a result, staff quickly address any barriers that young people face that prevent them from continuing their learning.

The prime objective of the service is to support young people as they move towards adulthood and independence. In relation to developing practical skills, such as making routine health appointments, staff encourage young people to take responsibility for these tasks. Staff couple these basic skills with helping young people to lead healthy lifestyles, consider their diet choices and to take regular physical exercise. Young people plan and shop for their own meals and take some responsibility for managing a weekly allowance. However, staff do not make sure that young people's exit from the service is appropriately planned. For example, young people due to leave the home in the coming weeks do not yet know where they will be living, who they may be living with or what support services they will receive. As a result of this shortfall, young people say that they feel apprehensive and anxious about their futures.

Staff work with young people and their families to help support and further develop positive relationships. When young people are far away from their families, staff make sure that they maintain regular phone contact. They also provide young people with the practical and emotional support that they need to enjoy visits and social outings. As a result, young people are not isolated from their families.

How well children and young people are helped and protected: requires improvement to be good

Young people are safe and feel safe in the home and they do not identify bullying to be

an issue. One young person said that although on occasions they 'fall out big time', they perceive this to be 'normal teenage stuff'. Nevertheless, staff are mindful of these behaviours and closely monitor interactions between young people for signs of bullying or intimidation. This ensures that young people are protected from bullying.

Staff produce detailed internal risk assessments. These documents highlight the impact that young people's behaviours have on their development and on the safety and welfare of others. Risk assessments include strategies to manage and reduce known risks. These utilise one-to-one sessions with specialist therapists. However, staff do not consistently review and update these, or other internal support plans, as required. For example, they do not remove previous risk factors that are no longer relevant. As a result, young people's progress is not clearly highlighted.

Incidents of young people going missing from the home are rare. On these occasions, staff work with local specialist police officers, nominated public protection agencies and the placing authority. Together, these professionals consider potential risks to young people's safety, including any risk of sexual exploitation or radicalisation, when they are absent from the home. In addition, this interagency approach takes account of the risks that young people present to others. This collaboration means that staff take appropriate and timely actions to quickly locate young people missing from the home. This promotes their welfare and safety.

Young people thrive on verbal praise. Staff use this approach to encourage young people to manage their own behaviours and to take responsibility for their actions. The frequency of physical restraint continues to reduce. This is because young people develop alternative means of managing their frustrations and an appropriate level of consideration and empathy for others. When physical restraint is necessary to prevent young people from harming themselves or others, staff complete records of these events. These documents include antecedents to these events, any de-escalation techniques used and feedback from young people. As a result, managers and senior staff are able to evaluate the appropriateness of the use of this measure of control. Furthermore, staff have a good understanding of child protection and safeguarding matters, including how to manage allegations. They regularly refresh their training in this area of practice. This supports safe practice and protects young people.

Staff undertake regular health and safety and fire safety checks. Young people participate in these activities. Consequently, they have an appropriate understanding of how to safely exit the home in the event of a fire.

Young people say that they know how to make a complaint. One young person said, 'Staff talk to us about how to make a complaint and there is lots of stuff around the place about it.' Since the last inspection, there has been one complaint. Although this was addressed, managers did not retain a suitable record of this concern or the actions taken to resolve this issue. This shortfall potentially questions the transparency of the complaints procedures.

The effectiveness of leaders and managers: inadequate

The registered manager left the service in May 2017. A new manager took up post shortly after this time. A delay in the submission of a complete application form by the new manager means that the home has been without a registered manager since this date. Ofsted is now in the process of undertaking the necessary verification and suitability checks for the new manager. However, this delay means that in line with the social care common inspection framework, Ofsted judges the effectiveness of leaders and managers in the home to be inadequate.

Since the last inspection, the new manager and senior staff have taken action to scrutinise and review the quality of care provided by this specialist service. This action includes a full case-file audit of documentation pertaining to young people previously living in the home. This confidential information is not appropriately stored in the home. It is housed in a general meeting room used by young people and visitors. This is unacceptable.

Although staff generally maintain the safety of the home, parts of the setting are aesthetically institutional. These areas require refurbishment and redecoration to create a comfortable and welcoming environment.

The new manager's evaluation of the service includes the review of the home's statement of purpose. This is to ensure that the defined aims and objectives of the service remain relevant to the needs of the young people. The recently revised monitoring and review systems are comprehensive. However, these systems do not currently include a way for the new manager to seek young people's views and feedback regarding the quality of care that they receive. This means that young people's opinions are not intrinsic to the development of the home.

Relationships between the home and external agencies, including placing authorities, are generally positive. One social worker said, 'The manager is new to this home but very much on the ball. She makes sure that the young people always come first.'

Training programmes for staff are up to date and reflective of young people's bespoke needs. All eligible staff hold relevant diploma-level qualifications or are working towards these. Staff participate in regular therapeutic consultation sessions with the organisation's psychologists and psychotherapists. These sessions enable staff to reflect on how they work with the young people to complement the more formal therapy sessions. Furthermore, staff performance, skills and knowledge are now better monitored. All staff receive regular practice-related formal supervision. The quality of these sessions continue to improve under the new manager. This means that staff are able to gain the skills that they need to support young people effectively.

Information about this inspection

Inspectors have looked closely at the experiences and progress of children and young people. Inspectors considered the quality of work and the differences made to the lives of children and young people. They watched how professional staff work with children and young people and each other and discussed the effectiveness of help and care provided. Wherever possible, they talked to children and 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 whom it is trying to help, protect and look after.

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: SC068032

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: Post vacant

Inspector

Jo Stephenson, social care inspector

The Office for Standards in Education, Children's Services and Skills (Ofsted) regulates and inspects to achieve excellence in the care of children and young people, and in education and skills for learners of all ages. It regulates and inspects childcare and children's social care, and inspects the Children and Family Court Advisory and Support Service (Cafcass), schools, colleges, initial teacher training, further education and skills, adult and community learning, and education and training in prisons and other secure establishments. It assesses council children's services, and inspects services for children looked after, safeguarding and child protection.

If you would like a copy of this document in a different format, such as large print or Braille, please telephone 0300 123 1231, or email enquiries@ofsted.gov.uk.

You may reuse this information (not including logos) free of charge in any format or medium, under the terms of the Open Government Licence. To view this licence, visit <http://www.nationalarchives.gov.uk/doc/open-government-licence>, write to the Information Policy Team, The National Archives, Kew, London TW9 4DU, or email: psi@nationalarchives.gsi.gov.uk.

This publication is available at <http://www.gov.uk/government/organisations/ofsted>.

Interested in our work? You can subscribe to our monthly newsletter for more information and updates: <http://eepurl.com/iTrDn>.

Piccadilly Gate
Store Street
Manchester
M1 2WD

T: 0300 123 1231
Textphone: 0161 618 8524
E: enquiries@ofsted.gov.uk
W: <http://www.gov.uk/ofsted>

© Crown copyright 2017