

## Children's homes inspection - Full

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|----------------------------------|--------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|
| <b>Inspection date</b>           | <b>11/08/2015</b>                                                                                |
| <b>Unique reference number</b>   | <b>SC068032</b>                                                                                  |
| <b>Type of inspection</b>        | <b>Full</b>                                                                                      |
| <b>Provision subtype</b>         | <b>Children's home</b>                                                                           |
| <b>Registered person</b>         | <b>Branas Isaf Personal Development Centre Limited</b>                                           |
| <b>Registered person address</b> | <b>5th Floor, Metropolitan House,<br/>3 Darkes Lane, POTTERS BAR,<br/>Hertfordshire, EN6 1AG</b> |

|                               |                       |
|-------------------------------|-----------------------|
| <b>Responsible individual</b> | <b>Kathleen Jones</b> |
| <b>Registered manager</b>     | <b>Kevin Reade</b>    |
| <b>Inspector</b>              | <b>Phillip Morris</b> |

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|-------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|--------------------------------|
| <b>Inspection date</b>                                                                          | <b>11/08/2015</b>              |
| <b>Previous inspection judgement</b>                                                            | <b>Sustained Effectiveness</b> |
| <b>Enforcement action since last inspection</b>                                                 | <b>None</b>                    |
| <b>This inspection</b>                                                                          |                                |
| <b>The overall experiences and progress of children and young people living in the home are</b> | <b>Good</b>                    |
| The children's home provides effective services that meet the requirements for good.            |                                |
| <b>how well children and young people are helped and protected</b>                              | <b>Good</b>                    |
| <b>the impact and effectiveness of leaders and managers</b>                                     | <b>Good</b>                    |

**SC068032**

## **Summary of findings**

### **The children's home provision is good because:**

- Effective, good quality care improves the lives of young people.
- Young people make progress from difficult starting points. Comprehensive assessment together with bespoke therapeutic intervention is provided.
- Education and training are valued. Most young people have good college placements. Attendance is good and progress is made.
- Relationships between the young people and their families are maintained through good, regular contact arrangements.
- Skills for living independently are developed. Young people are helped to improve skills in all areas for when the time comes to leave care.
- Good and consistent practice by staff keep young people safe.
- Young people benefit from a stable, caring and nurturing staff team. Led by a qualified and experienced registered manager.
- Recruitment processes for new staff are robust, staff receive effective supervision, training and guidance.
- Good and effective relationships are in place with partner agencies. These relationships support the progress of young people.
- There is a shortfall in the physical conditions of the home. The kitchen area and upstairs are not of a good standard.

## 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 with the given timescales.

| Requirement                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                            | Due date   |
|------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|------------|
| <p>6: The quality and purpose of care standard</p> <p>In order to meet the quality and purpose of care standard with particular reference to the physical conditions of the home, the kitchen area and the upstairs area registered provider must ensure-</p> <p>(b) ensure that staff-</p> <p>(vii) provide to children living in the home the physical necessities they need in order to live there comfortable.</p> | 25/09/2015 |

## Full report

### Information about this children's home

The home provides care and accommodation for young people between the ages 10-18 (10-17 upon admission) who have displayed harmful or concerning behaviours and may also have moderate learning difficulties.

The home is privately owned and managed.

### Recent inspection history

| Inspection date | Inspection type | Inspection judgement    |
|-----------------|-----------------|-------------------------|
| 05/03/2015      | CH - Interim    | Sustained effectiveness |
| 10/07/2014      | CH - Full       | Good                    |
| 18/03/2014      | CH - Interim    | Good Progress           |
| 29/01/2014      | CH - Full       | Good                    |

## Inspection Judgements

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|-----------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|-----------------|
| <b>The overall experiences and progress of children and young people living in the home are</b>                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                     | <b>good</b>     |
| <p>Effective quality care is making a positive difference to the lives of young people. The stable staff team provide good, nurturing care with young people's needs prioritised. Young people make sustained progress from difficult starting points in many aspects of their lives. In particular, young people access further education or training. Behaviour has improved with ongoing therapeutic intervention attempting to reduce the risk of harmful behaviours.</p> <p>Young people live in an environment where they settle, are happy and content. A young person said, 'I love it here. It is like a big family and I get on really well with everyone, it's brilliant here, the staff are all nice'. The stable staff team are consistent in practice, leading to a settled pleasant place to live.</p> <p>The importance of education and training is understood and valued by the registered manager and staff. As a result, most young people have secured college placements. They have a positive view of college. To their credit, attendance is good. The registered manager and staff are positive and enthusiastic regarding college. They praise young people's achievements and remain forward looking and aspirational.</p> <p>Young people's self-care and independence skills are continually developed. They are developing skills in all areas of independent living, budgeting, shopping, cooking and accessing services. For example, the registered manager and staff support them to live in the independence flat on a 12 weeks rolling rota. This not only tests their skills in living independently, it also enables them to explore and understand the emotional challenge of living alone. Staff are able to continually evaluate their skills and abilities, making adjustments to plans and support as required. This improves their skills, additionally preparing them emotionally and developing confidence.</p> <p>The registered manager and staff prioritise young people's health needs. They maintain contact with a variety of professionals who meet their primary health care. Annual health assessments are completed, optician and dental care provided. They receive advice and support regarding eating a healthy diet and exercise. Despite advice, some young people continue to smoke. The staff consistently ensure advice and support is provided to stop smoking or decrease. This has met with some success with reductions in smoking overall.</p> <p>Young people's emotional and behavioural needs are met. The provision of</p> |                 |

therapeutic services as set out in the statement of purpose. Young people undergo a comprehensive therapeutic and risk assessment at the start of placement. This ensures their needs and risks are understood by those charged with their care. Therapy takes place, at least weekly. Reports from the therapy team are completed following each session. This helps guide staff to up-date placement plans and provides the best possible care.

Relationships between young people and their families are valued. The staff team facilitates contact with family. Contact takes place within a clear and assessed plan. Regular reviews of contact take place. The staff team and professionals adjust the level of contact if required. This helps maintain family links whilst ensuring contact is safe and enjoyable.

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| <b>How well children and young people are helped and protected</b>                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                          | <b>good</b>     |
| <p>Young people feel safe. The registered manager and staff understand the importance of safeguarding, implementing robust practice. Good practice in risk assessment takes place. Assessments have to be thorough and consider both risk to young people but also of harm to others. Regular reviews of assessments support staff to keep young people safe.</p> <p>Managing risk is good. Young people are closely supervised and monitored. Young people progress towards taking appropriate risks as part of preparing for living independently. This is carried out in consultation with other agencies and as part of a clearly defined plan.</p> <p>Strong multi-agency working ensures young people are safeguarded. The registered manager and staff work well with youth offending services, education, health and local authorities. Communication is effective. Relevant meetings take place including network meetings looked after reviews and placement-planning meetings. These are forums to share information and coordinate plans. This view is endorsed by a professional who stated, 'I have found the home to be excellent, very clear and open communication'. As a result, the young person is safe.</p> <p>Young people's behaviour is managed well. The registered manager and staff ensure an environment of high praise and warmth. This continually promotes positive behaviour. The use of techniques such distraction, de-escalation and redirection of negative behaviour is successful. As a result, recourse to using sanctions and consequences for negative behaviour is rare. There exist mutually</p> |                 |

respectful relationships between the staff group and young people. Young people understand what is expected of them in terms of behaviour. As a result, their behaviour continues to improve.

Physical interventions are rare and only used to prevent harm to the young person or others. All staff members have received training in the appropriate use of physical intervention. Recording of physical intervention is good and detailed. Individual work following any physical intervention takes place trying to ascertain the reasons for the behaviour to prevent recurrence.

Young people have become increasingly safe. They do not use alcohol, drugs or go missing. The staff team are skilled, undertaken training and understand the signs and symptoms of drug and alcohol use. They understand the risks to young people of going missing from care and work pro-actively to prevent this.

The registered manager has completed a good location assessment. He has worked well with partner agencies to develop the assessment. This means he is aware of the community risks. This ensures that risk factors emanating from the community and environment are understood. This ensures young people are living in an environment where risks are reduced.

Young people have access to an independent advocacy service and receive visits from their social workers and independent reviewing officers. They have access to a phone and contact details of professionals they can turn to for help and support. Young people know how to complain. They are able to express their views on the care they receive.

The physical environment of the home, in parts is of a poor standard. The kitchen is poor with an oven door missing. Cupboards are worn and uneven. The upstairs area is also poor with the decoration not being maintained to a good standard. This does not provide an environment that young people can enjoy or feel proud to live in.

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|                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                            | Judgement grade |
| <b>The impact and effectiveness of leaders and managers</b>                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                | <b>good</b>     |
| <p>Young people benefit from a suitable qualified registered manager. He has considerable experience and is committed to improving services to young people. He holds a level four National vocational qualification in leadership and management for care services. He has been registered since April 2011. The registered manager responded promptly to a requirement made at the last inspection. This extended to ensuring that all documents relating to a young</p> |                 |

person's admission was obtained.

New young people admitted to the home are supported by plans overseen by the registered manager. Admissions are planned, with information obtained from agencies and the previous placement. Placement plans consist of services the young person will need to thrive physically, emotionally and educationally.

Young people receive good consistent care from a stable staff team. There are currently no vacancies and the registered manager does not have to utilise agency staffing. Staff are supported, supervised and accountable in their work with young people. They receive regular guidance and support from the registered manager. Their practice is appraised and they receive a good level of training.

Robust recruitment processes safeguards young people. Prospective new staff undergo a rigorous recruitment process. References are scrutinised, cross-referenced and validated. Appropriate employment checks are undertaken, ensuring the risk of young people being harmed by those in positions of trust is reduced.

Good communication takes place across the staff team. Effective team meetings take place regularly. These are guided by clear agendas and are well attended by staff. Staff members have respectful professional relationships in which they express ideas and views. This results in a well-coordinated and efficient staff group that harness each other's strengths benefitting young people.

The statement of purpose is accurate and detailed. Recently reviewed and amended by the registered manager this document provides stakeholders with detailed information of the services provided. It sets out qualifications and experience of staff and managers alike.

The registered manager has a good grasp of the strengths and weaknesses of the service. Monitoring occurs through monthly visits from the challenging independent visitor. The visits are rigorous, including scrutiny of records and standards of care. The visitor has recently made some recommendations for improvements. These reports are submitted in line with the regulations. This external scrutiny ensures high standards are maintained and any areas of concern are quickly identified.

Health and Safety for young people and staff are a priority for the registered manager. He completes and reviews the home's risk assessments and fire and evacuation procedures are also followed. This means the registered manager is ensuring compliance with requirements.

## 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 looked after children 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 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 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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