

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 works with six children who have sexually harmful behaviours.

The provider offers a therapeutic service and operates a school off-site.

The registered manager has been registered since 2018. Two acting managers have been in post at different times to cover her maternity leave since December 2017.

The current acting manager has applied to register with Ofsted.

Inspection dates: 31 July to 1 August 2018

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 requires improvement to be good

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: 6 November 2017

Overall judgement at last inspection: requires improvement to be good

Enforcement action since last inspection: none

Recent inspection history

Inspection date	Inspection type	Inspection judgement
06/11/2017	Full	Requires improvement to be good
23/02/2017	Interim	Sustained effectiveness
01/11/2016	Full	Good
29/03/2016	Interim	Sustained effectiveness

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))	31/10/2018
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; help each child to understand how to keep safe; and have the skills to identify and act upon signs that a child is at risk of harm. (Regulation 12 (1)(2)(a)(i)(ii)(iii))	31/10/2018
The registered person must recruit staff using recruitment procedures that are designed to ensure children's safety.	31/10/2018

The registered person may only— employ an individual to work at the children’s home; if the individual satisfies the requirements in paragraph (3). The requirements are that— the individual is of integrity and good character; the individual has the appropriate experience, qualification and skills for the work that the individual is to perform; the individual is mentally and physically fit for the purposes of the work that the individual is to perform; and full and satisfactory information is available in relation to the individual in respect of each of the matters in Schedule 2. (Regulation 32 (1)(2)(a)(b)(3)(a)(b)(c)(d))	
The registered person must ensure that— within 48 hours of the use of the measure, the registered person, or a person who is authorised by the registered person to do so (“the authorised person”)— has spoken to the user about the measure; and has signed the record to confirm it is accurate; and within 5 days of the use of the measure, the registered person or the authorised person adds to the record confirmation that they have spoken to the child about the measure. (Regulation 35 (3)(b)(i)(ii)(c))	31/10/2018

Recommendations

- The registered person should ensure that staff can access appropriate facilities and resources to support their training needs and should understand the key role they play in the training and development of staff in the home. (‘Guide to the children’s homes regulations including the quality standards’, page 53, paragraph 10.11)

This is with reference to ensuring that specific refresher training is delivered so that staff skills remain in line with the core purpose of the service.

Inspection judgements

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

A multi-agency approach and intensive support from the therapeutic team mean that children get well-coordinated support for their emotional well-being and future safety.

The service supports children not in full-time education to use their time constructively and to enrol on courses to help them to achieve nationally recognised vocational qualifications. This helps them to prepare for independent living. Children have close support and supervision because they have one-to-one staffing.

The quality of care planning and the home environment, that were previously raised as a requirement at the last inspection in November 2017, continue to require improvement to be good. The registered provider has invested in the décor & fabric of the home and further improvement is planned to provide a high-quality environment.

Care plans still do not always show the progress that children are making against the placing authority's current placement plan. Also, plans do not provide the details of the arrangements for the safe administration of children's medication in accordance with the prescribing doctor. Records of direct work with children do not always describe the work that staff do with children after significant incidents. This creates a missed opportunity to help children to become safer or more in control of their emotions.

Despite these weaknesses in care planning records, children's placing authorities and the staff told Ofsted that children make progress. The manager has helped three children to move on successfully into planned independent living. This has included helping the children to build safe local networks.

Staff work well with children's families when this is part of the placing authority plan. Staff support family contact, even when they live far from the home. Families get a warm welcome at the home and when appropriate become part of the team around the child. Consultation is improving. One relative has made suggestions about increasing large age-appropriate outdoor play equipment to help children to let off steam.

One independent reviewing officer and one family member both described their different children being 'in the right place'.

The independent reviewing officer of a different child, who will shortly be leaving the service, said: 'They have encouraged good outcomes in all aspects of his life, social, emotional, educational and in keeping in touch with his family. His progress is a testament to everyone's support.'

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

Children are much safer while living at the home. Close supervision, constructive activities and a newly reflective approach help staff and children to think about protection issues. The organisation ensures that children have regular access to an independent advocate, so that they can voice any concerns.

Some aspects of help and protection require improvement. This is important in the light of the specialist nature of the service.

Staff have not taken effective measures to ensure that children do not get hold of mobile phones and access unsafe online activity or do not smoke. Children's risk assessment plans do not contain advice to help minimise these risks for the future. The staff have also not included a placing authority request for an assessment to be completed in relation to mobile phone use.

The home has a calm and safe atmosphere. The current manager and staff have recently made improvements in the use of a restorative approach to increase children's self-awareness and to reduce the need for physical restraint. However, records do not always show that a manager has spoken to the child or staff directly involved in the restraint, about the actual restraint, particularly when a floor hold has been used or how the child got to the floor. On one occasion, there was a long delay before staff and one child received any meaningful discussion with a manager. Furthermore, strategies advised by a manager to reduce the need for physical restraint have been missed from a child's care plan for several months.

Out of two recruitment files sampled, one file did not show that the organisation has requested an up-to-date check from the disclosure and barring service for a new member of staff. Consequently, managers cannot demonstrate how they have taken an informed decision about a member of staff's suitability to work with children.

Local police and the local authority safeguarding officer are both positive about how the service safeguards children. One social worker said: 'We sleep better and are content with the care. He is safe.'

The effectiveness of leaders and managers: requires improvement to be good

The responsible individual has been at pains to reduce the impact of managerial change. She has ensured that effective managerial oversight after she identified a shortfall in the initial interim maternity leave cover arrangements in April 2018. Further managerial change is inevitable as the interim registered manager plans to hand over to a permanent registered manager.

The new interim manager, in post since June 2018, is working hard to improve the quality of children's records, to improve complaints processes, to improve care practice and to develop a more positive, child-focused behavioural approach. The new manager's

audit of staff training has indicated that not all staff have undertaken refresher training in the service's therapeutic approach or the core focus of harmful sexual behaviour.

Staff are positive about the difference that the new manager has made to the home in the quality of support, training and supervision and in setting aspirations for the children and the service. She has the leadership skills and experience to inspire the team so that staff practice relates to the children and that she delivers her plan for improvement.

The service works well with placing authorities, resolving any issues constructively and making challenges when necessary. One placing authority professional said of staff and managerial commitment: 'Everybody's always round the table.' Another independent reviewing officer said: 'I have, and would, recommend them (the service) to any of my colleagues.'

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: Emily Weeks
Leanne Bennett

Inspector

Christy Wannop: social care inspector

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