



Ministry
of Justice

The Right Honourable
Robert Buckland QC MP
Lord Chancellor & Secretary of
State for Justice

Amanda Spielman
HM Chief Inspector
Ofsted
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London
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MoJ Ref: 89489

16 July 2021

By Email Only

Dear Amanda,

URGENT NOTIFICATION – RAINSBROOK SECURE TRAINING CENTRE

Thank you for your letter dated 18 June 2021, setting out your concerns following the inspection of Rainsbrook Secure Training Centre (STC), run by MTC.

The safety and wellbeing of children in custody remains my paramount concern, and the serious issues highlighted in your inspection are very concerning. It is for this reason that I took the decision to transfer all children from Rainsbrook, placing them in alternative secure accommodation. This process has now concluded, having been conducted at pace, whilst balancing the need to ensure that transfers were handled appropriately and sensitively, and with the children's needs and interests at the forefront of decision making.

Placements and monitoring staff from the Youth Custody Service (YCS) have had regular engagement with key stakeholders so that they were aware of developments at the centre, and with Youth Offending Teams to ensure the suitability of alternative placements; and each child has received an individual allocation assessment tailored to their needs and risks. The YCS has spoken to every child to talk through options and explain the situation so that they were aware of the reasons why they were being transferred and the timescales involved, with this also communicated to their family, carers and associated professionals. Barnardo's have also increased their advocacy provision at the centre and prior to transfer, the receiving establishment has had contact with children transferring to ensure any concerns they may have could be addressed.

Following their transfer, follow-up contact has or will be made with the child in a medium which is responsive to their needs. This work will be completed with each child to determine how they are settling-in and to assess any ongoing support required from the receiving establishment.

The YCS monitoring team have maintained a visible presence at the centre to ensure that during the decant, any remaining children were visited daily to check they were safe and being well supported and cared for as part of the transition, as well as providing daily oversight of the programme offered to the remaining children to ensure an enriched regime.

In addition to the decant of the centre, I am currently considering all options regarding the future of Rainsbrook STC. When these commercial discussions have concluded, I will of course update you regarding the outcome. It is for these reasons that I am writing to you with an interim position and I will issue a fuller response once considerations around the centre's future have concluded.

I would like to reassure you that I continue to take the Urgent Notification protocol very seriously, and prior to any future decisions being taken in relation to the centre, the concerns raised in the December 2020 and June 2021 Urgent Notifications will be fully considered to ensure the safety, care and wellbeing of children.

Thank you for the diligent and robust scrutiny Ofsted and your inspectorate partners continue to provide.

Yours sincerely

A handwritten signature in black ink that reads "Robert Buckland". The signature is written in a cursive, slightly slanted style.

RT HON ROBERT BUCKLAND QC MP