



Standard 3 Visit

Name of Service	Southview School – ‘The View’
Date of previous visit	18/06/2024
Date of this visit	11/09/2024
Standard 3 Visitor	Mark Goode
Time of visit	14.15
Visit Supported by	George Walklett – Head of Care

About the Independent Visitor

Visiting the residential provision today is Mark Goode. Mark has worked in the Education sector for the past 24 years, leading in multiple Schools and alternative providers with experience as both Headteacher and Executive Headteacher. Mark spent time as one of Her Majesty’s Inspectors with OFSTED. Mark is experienced in leading bespoke education covering ages 4 to 19 across the full academic range for pupils with wide-ranging complex additional, special and health needs. Mark’s strong track-record of inspection processes has helped organisations with low ratings, as well as both ‘Good’ and ‘Outstanding’ ratings. Mark undertakes visits on behalf of Platinum Care Consultancy in a number of residential School settings. These include settings designated for care and education of children with emotional and behavioural difficulties, learning difficulties, sensory impairment, physical disabilities and health conditions.

Standard 3 VISITS

INTRODUCTION: Standard 3 - Monitoring by independent visitors (as of 5th September 2024, no updates in the NMS have been made since September).

3.1 The governing body, trustees, or proprietor of the school appoint a representative who is independent of the leadership and management of the school to visit the residential provision six times, spread evenly, over the course of a school year and complete a written report on the conduct of the school. The representative is vetted in line with the school's safe recruitment policy, in accordance with the safer recruitment requirements set out in Keeping children safe in education, and has the skills and authority to effectively carry out this role

3.2 Monitoring visits are carried out unannounced. They include:

- **conversations with children, the senior management team and staff;**
- **conversations with social workers where relevant;**
- **conversations with parents/carers where relevant;**
- **checks on the school's records of attendance, complaints, sanctions, bullying, restraint (including restrictive interventions), risk assessments, and where they exist, individual care plans for children including in relation to residential provision;**
- **evaluation of the quality of the provision and effectiveness of the care provided to children and whether they are safeguarded;**
- **assessment of the suitability and physical condition of the building, furniture and equipment of the residential provision and the external environment.**

3.3 Written reports of all monitoring visits are provided to the headteacher (or school equivalent) and where applicable the governing body, trust, or proprietor.

- **Reports are also provided to each member of that body (or the appropriate committee of that body) within two weeks and as written by the visitor without amendment or summary. The governing body, trustees, or proprietor of the school should record a formal response to each written report.**
- **Monitoring reports and formal responses should be retained by the school and made available during an inspection and, on request, shared with any placing authorities and with the local authority where the school is located.**

3.4 The headteacher (or school equivalent), governing body, trustees, or proprietor carry out, and record in writing, once each year: a review of the operation and resourcing of the school's welfare provision for residential pupils, in relation to:

- **its Statement of Purpose;**
- **its staffing policy;**
- **the placement plans for individual children; and**
- **an internal assessment of its compliance with these standards and**
- **actions it will undertake to ensure compliance.**

Introduction and Context for this visit

Southview School is a 3-19 day special school for Physically and Neurologically Impaired (PNI) children and students situated in a modern, inclusive and accessible building in Witham. The school are part of the Hope Learning Community, and we work alongside two other schools, Market Field School and Chatten Free School. There is also a satellite Market Field College based in Clacton. We have opened our college site, just adjacent to the main school building. The college site houses our college and key stage 4 classes, as well as our hydrotherapy pool. All three schools work collaboratively together and there is a strong culture of mutual support and sharing of expertise. The school is unique in Essex Local Authority as the only special school exclusively for PNI children and students. Southview School is staffed by a highly skilled and dedicated team of teachers, support staff and therapists who work holistically and collaboratively to provide a high quality learning experience for all children and students.

Southview School strive to create a happy school where children feel safe and are confident to 'give things a go'. The drive to see a relaxed atmosphere is balanced against the statement that they really do work the children hard! Ofsted commented (when visited in September '22) that 'Southview School is a thriving, joyous place to learn. Pupils are inspirational, happy and delightful to speak with'.

The school are experienced in using a wide variety of equipment and technologies to support children and students, enhancing their experiences and keeping them safe. Southview is a school that values standards and achievement and they are extremely proud of all that goes on at the school.

Southview Educational Residential Provision ('The View') occupies the top floor of a purpose built building in Witham, adjacent to the main school in Conrad Road. The building has been specifically designed to accommodate all of the students' needs, and to make it the perfect place for the students to thrive and enjoy a wonderful residential experience.

The main aim of The View is to support individual students with a bespoke package which enables them to develop skills in preparation for their next steps and to become a confident and responsible member of our society. The View has been designed as an education intervention, to support broad targets and to work with the specific needs and requirements of all students. A placement at The View is designed to provide early intervention enabling students to develop individual skills, promote change, build confidence and open up more opportunities for their future. The model is deeply rooted in making progress that is meaningful for the students and their families, by supporting them to have greater autonomy and gain confidence to influence and shape the future with their children. Families are to be supported to work with and understand future provisions and other providers, and to receive specialist advice. There is a commitment to enable the voices of all stakeholders to be heard and recognised.

The View was set to open in 2 phases for the 10 bedrooms. It was explained that phase 1 will see 5 bedrooms be accommodated for the planned opening (February 2024), and then the opening of the other 5 bedrooms in phase 2 after the first school year around September 2024. As things stand at the time of this visit, the Head of Care explained that 3 of the cohort that had been on roll when I last visited have now ceased boarding, with one remaining on the boarding roll for this term. The process of gathering the views of the boarders and their families had given rise to some very positive feedback (covered elsewhere in this report). 2 new boarders have started attending and 1 was due to start the following week. The plan is that this number is set to rise this term to 5 boarders.

The projection is then that, after a final staff member has been recruited for the present, numbers will stay at 6 for the duration of this academic year. The aim then is that numbers will rise to 8 at a time boarding from September 2025. The staff team that is anticipated will see 8 Residential staff, plus the Head of Care, and this will enable a situation where 2 teams of 4 staff operate shifts. The Head of Care further explained that if there is staff absence that the aim is to recruit support staff from the TA workforce in the school rather than use agency owing to their familiarity with the pupils. This pupil: staff ratio is also being applied as a means to ensure that the more complex students at the school have access to the residential setup.

The reasoning behind the pace of growth was explained very eloquently by the Head of Care as being proportionate and deliberate to ensure that the quality that is present in the current systems is maintained and embedded. There is a view that to open too much too soon is not desired as it may risk this focus on quality. This is a very sensible approach to take and one that, in my opinion, should serve the stated aspiration of making the care as impactful and sustained as possible very well.

During this visit I once again undertook an extensive consultation alongside the Head of Care, reviewed a range of paperwork to evaluate progress since the recent visit that I undertook as the View has yet to receive its first formal inspection (although this feels imminent). We had discussed the possible adaptations to the inspection judgement processes following the recent publicity around the removal of overall judgements ahead of the visit, and I am very encouraged by the focussed fashion that the Head of Care has continued the NMS and SCCIF based evaluations with great rigour.

During this visit I also met the new boarders, reviewed the outgoing and new care plans, spoke to staff, toured both sides of the residential space, and reached out to a parent of a relatively long standing boarder. As a response to a new introduction system that the Head of Care explained, the 2nd week of term is now the first week of boarding and as such the newer borders had only been in residence for one evening. This has had the effect of adjusting plans to consult with new parents in term 2 rather than in this visit. The details of my discussions are captured in the consultations section below.

Areas requiring action from previous visit

Action Point from Previous Visit	Provider's Response and Verification in this visit
<p><u>NMS and SCCIF Audit Processes</u> For the strong work present in individual plans, the residential development plans and the NMS reflections to be captured in the SCCIF audit to aid the process of self-evaluation and inspection.</p>	<p><u>Verification in this visit</u> In discussion with the Head of Care I reviewed the extremely thorough folder of evidence for the NMS review and suggested over how to make sure it meets the requirements of Standard 3.4. This is detailed below in the consultations section. Similarly, I considered the live SCCIF audit tool that exists alongside the Head of Care and my review is detailed below in the consultations section as well.</p>
<p><u>Impact Data</u> For the Head of Care to consider the suggestions made related to how the impact of the residential setup can be evidenced as both qualitative and quantitative data, and then tracked over time.</p>	<p><u>Verification in this visit</u> The Head of Care showcased how the targets are being used to gather statistical data in this visit related to the rates of completion of targets. This is set to be processed into tables and graphs that will grow as the residential service grows over time to have a body of evidence of impact over time. Each file contains very strong evaluative feedback from families as well as from key workers. I encouraged the Head of Care to make sure that the evidence and references to it are included in the very proactive Inspectors pack that has been developed.</p>

<p><u>Support with embedding targets post-stays</u> For the Head of Care and school leaders to consider how best to support families after stays end in securing longer term embedding of newly learned/evidenced skills.</p>	<p><u>Verification in this visit</u> The Head of Care explained to me that a follow up process is planned in that boarders that return to Southview school are to be offered a return stay towards the end of their time on roll, and leavers are to be contacted and visited. The aim is to see the longer term impact and sustainable growth in the life skills of boarders tracked and reinforced. This is strong practice and I suggested that this should be referenced in the Inspectors pack that the Head of Care showcased to me as well.</p>
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Mandatory Areas for Standard 3	
Topic	Comments
<p>Records of attendance/ exclusion/ missing episodes 20.9</p>	<p>The Head of Care explained that the current cohort are very new and none have missed any boarding as yet. The former boarding cohort saw just 2 evenings missed by one boarder for health reasons, otherwise attendance was 100%. There have also been no instances of any resident going missing or being excluded from Residential.</p>
<p>Complaints 19.1, 19.2, 19.3</p>	<p>There have been no examples of complaints related to the Residential setup since my last visit in term 6. The close working collaborations that are captured in the very detailed planning documents illustrate that complaints are very unlikely and quite the opposite is the default response judging by the parental comments that I have scrutinised in the exit documentation. The praise and gratitude for the service is of the highest quality.</p>
<p>Sanctions 20.6</p>	<p>During this Standard 3 visit I enquired about this aspect, and it was confirmed that there have been no sanctions applied in the View since it opened. The time I spent with the newest residents illustrated how attentive to need the staff are, and the family atmosphere that exists makes it very unlikely that the circumstances where sanctions will be needed will occur.</p>
<p>Restraint (including restrictive interventions) 20.3, 20.4, 20.5, 20.6, 20.7</p>	<p>In a similar vein to the above comments, the proactive care I observed makes the circumstances where a restraint will be required very unlikely, and there have been none.</p>
<p>Placement Plans 7.2</p> <p>Risk Assessments Appendix B (11,16)</p>	<p>During this visit I examined a sample of the outgoing boarders' plans alongside the Head of Care and I was struck by the high level of detail in them, as well as the fulsome nature of the evaluations that are included from staff. I suggested that bringing the high quality that is present to a rounded end can easily be achieved by adding in the commentary that is present from parents and students into one place. This is merely an administrative task though as this evidence has been gathered already. They all have fortnightly deep reviews of all targets, risk assessments and protocols included. Each is a detailed case study filled with high quality evidence.</p> <p>I also scrutinised the plans for the newest arrivals and was impressed that, although they have merely one day of boarding so far, the same quality is present. And they all contain:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Very thorough consents.

	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Pre stay reviews and enquiries with families over the aims of residential from their perspective. - Clear 'how to help' guidance and suggestions. - Targets that are linked to the sections in EHCPs connected targets, ready for review every 2 weeks. - Evacuation plans and very detailed Risk Assessments. <p>The Head of Care also informed me that a new process before starting has been a week of Care staff attending classes in school to get to know the boarders before they begin boarding. This has proven a simple yet very effective tool for supporting quality information gathering and familiarity for both staff and students.</p>
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How well Children and Young People are Safeguarded.

During this visit the Head of Care explained that there had been no safeguarding issues raised or referred externally in the last days of the tenure of the former residents in term 6 of last year.

We then spent time reviewing the safeguarding records for the school related to the new boarders. There have been no concerns highlighted in the creation of the new planning documents and preparation for the first stays. I suggested that a trawl into any historical concerns for new boarders would be a positive idea of things to watch for after we scrutinised the past records for the newest arrivals.

The speed of access to the systems, and the willingness of the Head of Care to embrace this suggestion was a positive feature of this visit. This builds upon the comments in my last report as regards the fashion safeguarding is overseen and I have no concerns at all as a result of the discussions I held in this visit.

Suitability of the building, furnishings & external environment.

The Residential setup continues to 'feel' new and the gradual opening of the second wing that is underway adds to this feeling. The Head of Care explained that each wing now has residents within it and that the second lounge/kitchen area is set to open soon with a focus on independent cooking for the boarders that are capable of this.

The Head of Care also explained that a recent change has seen a Medicare alert box placed in the middle of the entrance hall between the two wings, as well as the central point in the Head of Care's Office. This has the effect of making any emergencies easier to respond to.

Given the newness of the tenure of the new cohort there was a feeling of being comfortable that was extremely pleasing to note during the tour.

Thematic Areas

Standard/SCCIF Reference	Evidence / Observation
	None undertaken in this visit.

Consultations Supporting this Visit.

Under Standard 3 this is stated as meaning that conversations with children, senior management team, staff and parents/carers and social workers, where relevant.

Consultation with the Head of Care.

During this visit I spent a good period of time with the Head of Care discussing the recommendations from my last visit, and undertaking supportive reviews of paperwork. Much of the detail is contained higher up this report but there are other features of note:

NMS and SCIIF audits, as well as preparation for the first Inspection

The Head of Care and I considered the preparatory paperwork that is in place and it is clear that there has been a great deal of work undertaken. The NMS evidence folder is extremely thorough and it is abundantly clear that making sure compliance is evident has been a central focus. There is a very comprehensive evidence folder and the staff have taken great care to make sure all aspects of the minimum standards are covered. I reminded the Head of Care of the requirements of Standard 3.4 (annual review of the Residential Setup and its component features). The Head of Care stated that there is a solid degree of confidence that these standards are met well.

In addition to this, the Head of Care has developed a living SCCIF audit document that details where and how the statements for the 3 key areas that Inspection focusses upon are met. This details evidence of meeting the requirements of the statements designated 'good' and many of the features of 'outstanding' across the 3 key strands of the SCCIF, as well as questions over aspects that may benefit from further action given the newness of the provision. In reviewing this document, I supported the Head of Care in interpreting the wording of several of the 'outstanding' areas and suggested that reflecting upon these would be beneficial before being inspected. The Head of Care is keen to keep this as a live document and for this to remain the case through and beyond the inspection. He also responded extremely well to being encouraged to ask hard questions of the evidence held and examine the impact coldly. This is a healthy trait to have and is a mark of truly high aspirations. In essence – minimum is not enough.

I was also particularly pleased to note that the Head of Care has begun preparation of a folder that showcases the evidence and its location for when the Inspection takes place. I gave some subjective feedback over highlighting the strengths that are present in the documents for the first tranche of boarders, and this that has moved onwards as well as the boarders in the residential at the time of the inspection. This would, in my opinion, showcase the fact that the systems in place have become embedded as coming from the perspective of high aspiration right from the start and connect very well with the aims in the statement of purpose. The Head of Care is line managed by the Deputy Headteacher and undertakes weekly supportive line management. Standards in the school generally have been inspected and recognised as extremely high, and this rigour is being applied to the SCCIF as well.

Overall, the paperwork that is held is extremely rigorous and well evaluated. I am confident that the Head of Care is well prepared for the imminent inspection and is determined to seek the feedback that will follow. In my view this is particularly the case related to ensuring the sustained impact of the work being undertaken with the boarders. It is very clear that by focussing on the SCCIF and aiming for the very highest standards, and by gathering all evidence comprehensively, the Leadership of the school and the Residential setup are providing a very high standard of support.

Other Updates

The Head of Care explained the fact that there have been two further adaptations to processes and use of the Residential Space this term:

- (1) A trial has been undertaken that sees Residential Staff move onto a day shift pattern for the first week of term, accompanying new boarders as they attend classes in school. This follows a period of information gathering from school staff and families that populates the planning documentation, and informs targets for their residential stays. This has proven to be a very valuable exercise and is to become a regular feature.
- (2) The Head of Care also explained that he is set to take a class for 'Life Skills' in the Residential space once a week for a group of college pupils. This is intended to support prospective boarders and build familiarity with the residential space.

Time spent in the Residential Environment with Staff and Boarders

During this visit I spent time with the 3 current boarders. This was the second evening boarding for two of them, with a longer standing boarder from last term also in attendance. The boarder that has carried on attending from last term recognised and greeted me warmly. We chatted briefly about her summer and it was evident how glad she was to be back in the residential setup. She was engaged in an art activity with a staff member and was happily taking part in a communal space.

One of the new boarders was very intrigued by my presence and guided me to a few locations in the residential space – pointing out features, identifying the photo of her key worker, and then asking what time dinner was using a visual aid. It became clear that she was hungry and this was then picked up on by staff who then used the relevant communication means to support this request.

The second of the new boarders was relaxing in his room during my visit, but staff were on hand to check on him, and he acknowledged my presence as well, although he did not choose to say hello on this occasion.

The main reflection for me on this time with the boarders was that they were very comfortable in the spaces, and had freedom to choose what they were doing. Staff were clearly supporting these choices and on hand. Given that this was only the second evening of boarding, the way the new boarders have settled in was evident, and this is no coincidence. The staff have all got a good knowledge of the boarders already and this is testament to the information gathering that has taken place.

Consultation with parents

Following this Standard 3 visit I spoke to the parent of one of the current boarders. We agreed that I would return to speak to the newer boarders as part of my next visit as they have only boarded for 2 evenings so far.

The parent that I reached confirmed that her daughter has been boarding for a period of last year and this one so far. The main reasons for boarding were that the parents feel that their location is quite isolated and that their daughter is somewhat isolated and as a result social mixing is a key area. In addition, they feel that growing independence, and making their daughter's chances of this being a sustainable thing were important factors in this decision as well.

The parent reported that the experience has been a very positive one for her daughter who loves boarding. Noticeable impacts have been that her daughter is overtly happier, now remembers to undertake personal care

without the need for reminders, is capable of cooking breakfast, and can undertake laundry (although the parent stated that this ends up being a house chore that she herself does – she is aware that her daughter does it at the residential setup).

The parent was very clear that the staff communicate extremely well, and have generally been brilliant. She explained that a report and feedback on events is communicated generally every other day and she is very happy about that.

The parent stated that she was very happy and appreciated the residential stays and had no concerns at all.

Summary of Visit and Quality of Provision

This visit came at a time when the first cohort of residents at Southview have generally been replaced with a new group, and as such the focus was largely upon reviewing how the impact of the last two terms has been translated into visible evidence, as well as ensuring that the new boarders are settling in well. The determination of the Head of Care to accept all critique and adjust systems and record keeping into live documents is a mark of just how far and fast the service has come. It is my view that this willingness to challenge themselves is the mark of a very strong provider, and the View is in a place where the leadership is determined to showcase the strong work that takes place.

The care on display remains of a very high standard, and this is validated by the reviewed progress made by those that have moved on from residential, and the feedback from the parents that I was able to both read and discuss as part of this visit.

I am keen to return and support the team as the new boarders settle in, and am hopeful that the many strengths that I see come across well when the likely Inspection arrives. The team are keen to learn from it and use the feedback to further enhance the experiences of the boarders.

My thanks once again go to all at The View for their ongoing welcome and support in my work.

Name: Mark Goode

Date: 13/09/2024

RECOMMENDATIONS AND/OR RESPONSE FOR THIS VISIT

Actions	Comments from Provider	Expected Completion Date
<p><u>Review paperwork and preparation for the first OFSTED Inspection</u> For the Head of Care and other leaders to consider the advice and discussions held in this visit related to the NMS and SCCIF Audits, as well as the contents of the Inspection pack. This should help the preparations for the initial OFSTED Inspection when it takes place.</p> <p><u>SCCIF (Outstanding Criteria): The Effectiveness of Leaders and Managers</u></p>		<p>Term 2 2024-5</p>

Leaders and managers lead by example, innovate and generate creative ideas to sustain the highest quality care for children.		
<p><u>Data of impact</u> For the Head of Care to continue the preparatory work related to statistical and graphical evidence of the impact of the View.</p> <p><u>SCCIF (Outstanding Criteria): The Effectiveness of Leaders and Managers</u> Leaders and managers are inspirational, confident and ambitious for children and influential in changing the lives of those in their care..</p>		Ongoing
<p><u>Proactive Safeguarding Checks</u> For the Head of Care to consider repeating the pre-visit trawl of historical Safeguarding concerns from the system for all new boarders prior to arrival in the View, as a means to prepare staff as to elements to be watchful for.</p> <p><u>SCCIF (Outstanding Criteria): How Well Children are Helped and Protected</u> Proactive and creative safeguarding practice means that all children, including the most vulnerable, have a strong sense of safety and well-being and they are unlikely to be missing from the school on a regular basis. Children are involved in creating ways to de-escalate situations and finding creative alternative strategies that are effective.</p>		Ongoing

Head of Residential Care's Comments

Thanks again Mark for visiting and providing a very detailed and thorough report about The View. Everyone has put a lot of effort into putting as much evidence into the NMS folder so this can be presented to the inspector on inspection. The Team have worked hard in getting the best results from our students and we have built up a lot of evidence to show this. I believe the SCIFF and NMS audit tools really help us know whereabouts we are and what needs doing moving forward, a live document I will use frequently to make sure all the NMS and framework targets are being met.

The new students are settling in really well. Having the other side of The View now open has meant that we have more space for students to use the Residential facilities.

Name: George Walklett

Date: 16.09.24

Head Teachers' Comments

I will echo George's comments and thank you for a detailed assessment of The View Mark. I am pleased to see acknowledged all the work George has put into the evidence folder around the NMS; this was a key development in ensuring we have evidence readily available to back up and support the excellent practice in The View. The only point to make is that the SCIFF will be under my and Carol's leadership; we feel this is appropriate as it reflects a more strategic leadership of The View. This is of course to take nothing away from George's excellent leadership and experience for the children and students. We are also developing a 'Scrutiny Group' which will be meeting later this month. Again, this is really to challenge (if/where appropriate) my and

Carol's strategic leadership and development of the provision, rather than the 'day to day' leadership and compliance. Carol and I are also doing our own internal monitoring, specifically with staff, which was started last week. We will be sharing the findings with George, which were very positive. These will be on the record and form part of an evidence base for an inspector to have sight of.

In summary, it is fair to say there is a great deal of pride around The View and what it means to the Southview offer for our children and students. George and his team should also feel a great sense of pride with what they have created, and we will continue to push and challenge to make sure the provision is the very best it can be.

Name: Julian Cochrane

Date: 16/09/24

Formal Response from the governing body, trustees, or proprietor of the school

Name: David Beardwell

David is out of the country for a number of weeks so will not be able to contribute to this particular report.

Date: