



## Standard 3 Visit

<b>Name of Service</b>	<b>Southview School – ‘The View’</b>
<b>Date of previous visit</b>	<b>21/01/2025</b>
<b>Date of this visit</b>	<b>28/03/2025</b>
<b>Standard 3 Visitor</b>	<b>Mark Goode</b>
<b>Time of visit</b>	<b>8.00am</b>
<b>Visit Supported by</b>	<b>George Walklett – Head of Care</b>

### 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 5<sup>th</sup> September 2024, no updates in the NMS have been made since September 2022).

**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 are 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, 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.

This term saw me visit on a Friday morning in the penultimate week of the term approaching the Easter break. This was selected as the Head of Care had been unwell and off work when I visited previously earlier in the term. It was explained that there is a current cohort of 5 boarders attending the Residential Service that had been boarding for a number of weeks this term. As such the current circumstances have settled in well and have reached a point where patterns and expectations are clear and well understood. Of the 5 boarders, 3 are new to boarding this term and 2 are returning boarders from the first tranche when the View opened. The circumstance and current position for each is explored lower in this report in the consultations section.

The Head of Care also explained that staffing is far more settled in the View presently and that a longer term planning exercise is beginning to map the support for boarders across the wider school and college community for 2025-26. The details of this are contained below in the consultations section of this report.

The visit also entailed a detailed reflection/consultation with the Head of Care related to the next steps and future development of the Residential Service in the context of next year and the best way to see evidence gathered to showcase the high quality work that is undertaken to support the boarders. I also reached out to the parents of two of the new boarding cohort as part of this visit, and the details of my discussions are included as a further consultation below in the text.

Areas requiring action from previous visit	
Action Point from Previous Visit	Provider's Response and Verification in this visit
<b><u>Leadership and Numbers Boarding</u></b> For discussions over the next phase of development of 'The View' to connect growth with preservation of the very high standards that exist.	<b><u>Follow Up review in this visit</u></b> The Head of Care explained the rationale for the 5 boarders that were attending, and gave me details of the next phase for the View into 2025-26. The details are contained below in the consultations section.
<b><u>Developing Data that shows the Impact of the View</u></b> For the Head of Care and other Key Leaders to consider the way the Pathway model can be evolved to connect research to evidence of impact over time.	<b><u>Follow Up review in this visit</u></b> The Head of Care explained that the extended stays and overall growing numbers that have accessed the View so far will enable a demonstration of the impact of staying upon a range of variables and that this is planned to be a focus area from next term. I suggested that, given the detailed approach to care planning and fortnightly reviews taken, each boarder is their own detailed case study, but that I can absolutely see the power of gathering together data of impact as well and agreed to review and support this in my next visit.

<p><b><u>Parental Feedback</u></b></p> <p>For the Head of Care to ensure that the details provided in this report, and the dialogue with the parents continues to be used to reflect and constantly evolve/improve the care on offer for all.</p>	<p><b><u>Follow Up review in this visit</u></b></p> <p>During this visit the Head of Care shared a response to the parent that I had spoken to in my last visit and reflected very openly about the learning taken from this. It has informed much of the next phase planning that is covered in the consultations section below. The Head of Care explained that it has been processed as a complaint and I applaud this very responsive way of using the events to power momentum.</p>
<p><b><u>Overall response from the key Leaders related to the above:</u></b></p> <p><u>Head of Care:</u></p> <p>Thanks for the report Mark. Concerning the parent's comments about the bedrooms, bedroom door window blinds have been ordered and fitted (Blackout) as understandably, some of our students do prefer to sleep in the pitch black. With the bedroom door windows the way they are, light does come through without any blinds there, as the hallway lights come on automatically due to the fire system in place. Concerning the bedroom doors, The door was looked at and WD40 was applied. Finger guard was also loosened and made so it does not rub against the bedroom door. The hinges could not be adjusted due to fire regulations from fire assessment company who have recently adjusted the doors to make them meet a fire safety assessment. This has all been logged as a complaint and entered into the Maintenance book. I have also spoken to the parent and have informed them of the resolution.</p> <p><u>Headteacher</u></p> <p>Thank you Mark for your report and I echo the positive points raised, and note George's response to the concerns raised by the parent. Hopefully, the slow paced integration may in due course facilitate another visit. We are currently looking at how we manage the admissions, particularly relevant as some healthcare needs/training need to be commissioned months in advance of a student's attendance, and this is an ongoing piece of work with George and the team. We are also exploring strengthening our student profiling protocols, again, an ongoing piece of work. We have decided the Wheel of Independence is not the correct research based model for The View but are currently exploring an interesting alternative.</p> <p><u>Representative Governor</u></p> <p>Thank you Mark for another very useful report. I visited The View on the afternoon of the 29th January and had a meeting with the Head of Care. We had discussions in several areas including staffing, new residents and their settling in and future plans. All very positive.</p> <p><b><u>Evaluation by Independent Visitor after this visit</u></b></p> <p>The response that the Head of Care has showcased in this visit related to the evolution of the service demonstrates the fact that the leadership at Southview are determined to see the service meeting the key pupil need at the school. The reflection I have included related to the student profiling process below contains an evaluation of this very considered approach.</p>	

<b>Mandatory Areas for Standard 3</b>	
<b>Topic</b>	<b>Comments</b>
<b>Records of attendance/ exclusion/ missing episodes 20.9</b>	The Head of Care explained that none of the boarders have been missing or excluded from boarding since my last visit in term 3. The attendance at school for each current boarder is detailed as; JB - 92.52%, CW - 97.64%, SA - 92.52%, LeS - 94.88%, LS - 98.03%. This once again indicates a positive picture overall given the complexity of some of the boarders' situations. The overall attendance average for the boarding cohort is therefore 95.12%, which is very healthy.

<b>Complaints</b> 19.1, 19.2, 19.3	The close working collaborations that are captured in the very detailed planning documents continue to illustrate that complaints are rare. That having been said, the Head of Care explained that the events that I reported upon related to the parent feedback in the last Standard 3 visit in term 3 has been responded to as two separate complaints. The detail in the dialogue with the parent is extremely sensitively handled and it is clear that the door remains open for the boarder in future, as well as the clear feedback and learning that has taken place being extremely thoughtful. The adaptations to the planning cycle and the development of the student profile are examples of the high standards in place at Southview.
<b>Sanctions</b> 20.6	During this Standard 3 visit I enquired about this aspect, and it was confirmed that there have been two such incidents for the first time. I reviewed the log as it was starting to be entered by the Head of Care, and it was clear that two boarders had disagreed over the TV and one had thrown the remote control across the room. No harm was done to anyone but the response has been to enter a full report of consequences into the log, to undertake a restorative approach, and this has resulted in the boarders writing each other apology letters and patching things up well. The event has been utilised as a learning activity and as such this is strong practice that helps all parties. I agreed to check upon the content and impact of the supportive work when I next visit the View in term 5.
<b>Restraint (including restrictive interventions)</b> 20.3, 20.4, 20.5, 20.6, 20.7	As detailed previously, the care and support in place at the View is a result of careful information gathering and knowledge of the boarders' needs. Targets are then based upon these considerations, and the circumstances where a restraint will be required are very unlikely. There continue to have been none at all since the View opened.
<b>Placement Plans</b> 7.2  <b>Risk Assessments</b> Appendix B (11,16)	<p>During this visit I examined a sample of the current boarders' plans alongside the Head of Care, and I was once again impressed by the high level of detail in all of them. These are then used to create and populate the extremely detailed placement plans for Residential that contain very specific targets. These all lead towards EHCP outcomes and are agreed by parents and the boarders themselves. Throughout their stays, the boarders are supported by reviews every two weeks that reflect their feelings and contain evaluations on how targets are being worked upon. This enables adjustments to targets or reviews of the effectiveness of the placements if needed.</p> <p>The sample that I reviewed in detail in this visit were the same boarders as the consultation calls that I have made, and the detail within each is comprehensive and contains very personalised targets for each boarder. I noted examples of the targeted areas being worked upon with the boarders in the planning documents and when I observed them and chatted to staff and boarders. I was impressed with the way the staff clearly know and use these targets to support the boarders well.</p>
<b>How well Children and Young People are Safeguarded.</b>	
During this visit the Head of Care and I considered the events recorded in CPOMS for each boarder as a holistic overview, and it was clear that this has been factored into the planning for each when setting up the placement plans that are in use. There are lots of staff involved in the evidence gathering and the Family Liaison is involved in any decisions that have a safeguarding bearing related to when placements at the View are considered. Each plan has a case study included in the process that factors safeguarding oversight into the picture and there are no concerns presently, although the staff are vigilant and watchful.	

No boarders have seen any fresh referrals to external services of any sort and I have no concerns related to safeguarding oversight as a result of the discussions I held in this visit. It holds a central place in the work undertaken in the View. One boarder that we discussed had a few concerns upon entry related to aspects of care at home, but the family have been engaging with ongoing social care support, and the details shared by the Head of Care indicate a close working relationship with the Family Liaison Officer at the school. This close collaboration is another example of high standards of working practice being the default operating style. This is encouraging, and as a result I have no concerns about safeguarding at Southview.

### **Suitability of the building, furnishings & external environment.**

The Residential setup remains a very well organised and maintained environment. It is spotlessly clean, spacious and well equipped for the boarders. It was clear from the plans that I reviewed in this visit that contact with families is used to make sure that any equipment that is helpful is in place. Anything that is needed is stored and used well. In addition, the Head of Care showed me the newest building at Southview school and explained that the proximity of this supportive school area and conference venue is set to be used for the benefit of boarders as all boarders will attend many of their lessons there. This is set to support transitions being easier and is well thought through.

The buildings, communal spaces and bedrooms are all very well proportioned and this helps support the boarders' development fully. The staff use of the space for each and collectively is well judged and proactive in that the second lounge space and kitchen are used to support any boarders that need or want this (film watching cited as an example related to the use of the space to enable the showing of age appropriate films: up to 15 certificates as this is deemed appropriate owing to the boarders' capacity). This is a reflection of supportive and sensible safeguards). There is also a bedroom that is currently not occupied that is doubling as a physio suite, which is a sensible use of space.

### **Thematic Areas**

<b>Standard/SCCIF Reference</b>	<b>Evidence / Observation</b>
	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.**

The Head of Care and I discussed a range of areas during this visit as summarised here:

#### **(1) Staffing and Future Growth/Development Plans:**

The Head of Care explained that there has been a period of reflection taking place since the last visit that I undertook in term 3, and that the way that the View operates is set to be slightly different moving forward. This is designed to give more pupils a chance to experience the View and expand their experiences by living away from home for a period of time. Most learners at Southview have not had this experience, and the example of the learner that was not able to sustain staying during my last visit has been learned from in an extremely thorough way. The Head of Care showcased a planning process that is part way completed that sees learners all undergo a profiling exercise to expose as many as possible to the View, and for them to be offered more than one term of residence if they are on the roll of the school and wish to attend from one year to the next. This review document is around half completed for the school population and has the following priority order attached to it:



- I. Stays in the View will be targeted at learners in their last year with the school.
- II. The 2<sup>nd</sup> priority will be given to learners expressing an interest/that are referred by teaching staff.
- III. Consideration will be given to the capacity for the boarders to work well together in a social sense.

The process involves a systematic evaluation of needs, uses the EHCP and staff feedback connected closely to the viability of meeting the said needs. Next term's cohort is already planned and identified. The process is being supplemented by the Head of Care enabling groups of learners to spend time in the View during the day time to increase familiarity, and reduce the chance of any failed placements.

In addition to this, the Head of Care explained that there is a strong desire to see the Residential Staff's expertise increase and they are looking to develop through training for PMLD learners and those with greater levels of medical needs as well. The Head of Care explained that this map across 2025-26 could be ready for a consultative process within my next visit, a task that I am very happy to see take effect.

The work being undertaken to refine all aspects of the rationale for boarding and expand impact is extremely strong and will, in my view, ensure that as many pupils as possible can benefit from what is becoming an ever more impressive setup. This ability to reflect and re-organise using feedback and evolving with the needs of the learners at the centre of decisions is a very strong trait. Pupils that are being identified have high levels of need, and will be supported by an extended handover period for Residential Staff to get to know learners in school ahead of boarding.

The Head of Care also explained that the statement of purpose has been re-written and will be on the website soon. This was shared with me in this visit, and I am happy to confirm that it captures the spirit and practice of the evolved brief for the View very well.

## **(2) Individual Plans for Current Boarders**

The Head of Care and I discussed the plans that are in place for each boarder in some depth, and the detail that was explained for each illustrates how much care is taken to get the planning correct and bespoke for all once again. One boarder is involved in an extended second stay that is set to carry on into next term as it is getting very close to him leaving the school and some key areas will benefit from this extended time. Targets have evolved to support this.

A second returning boarder simply has one target to navigate change better as time passes, and this is absolutely the correct thing to do, as is ending the placement to see the impact on home life and sustainable skills. The family are fully on board and supportive too.

The remaining three boarders have specific and bespoke targets that are being worked upon, and I spoke to two of the parents of these boarders in the days after my visit. The supportive feedback speaks volumes about the planning and implementation of the care that is on offer.

## **Consultations with parents of two new boarders**

In the days that followed the visit I spoke to two parents of recently started boarders and captured their views after most of their first stint of boarding had been completed.

Both parents explained that the boarders have been attending school at Southview for 9 years, and close to 11 years (since 4 years of age in each case) and that boarding had not necessarily been something that they felt was achievable prior to it being offered. Both have had their expectations surpassed by the positive impact of



the experience and stated very openly that they knew their children needed the opportunity but they as parents had not thought things could have gone so well.

The developments commented upon included the acquisition of a far more positive 'can do attitude' to a range of activities for everyday living that have not always been seen at home, or empowered. These included Cooking, Laundry, Socialising, Baking, Personal Care, Washing Up and setting the table for mealtimes. These developments for sure, but it is equally clear that both boarders have taken these skills and used them consistently in the home environment as well.

Both parents stated independently that they were really glad to have undertaken the boarding experience, they are both grateful for the opportunity and have nothing but praise for the staff team, communication in both an electronic sense and through contact books. They stated that the high level of feedback received (calls, pictures and narrative reports) means that they view the experience as an eye opener into what their children can achieve.

Neither parent had any concerns at all, and both were keen to stress that they are keen to see the experience repeated as the new statement of purpose and planning process that I have explained. Overall, the parental feedback here illustrates the powerful impact that the View can have and has done for these learners.

#### **Time spent in the Residential Environment with Staff and Boarders**

During this visit I spent time with all 5 boarders as they were enjoying breakfast and preparing for the day at school. I arrived at 8am and noted that the View is a balance between a calm chill out space and a hive of purposeful activity in which the boarders are encouraged and supported to do as much as possible of the daily tasks for life as they are able to. This included laundry in the main kitchen area, hair straightening and discussion of plans for packing bags (as it was a Friday and the boarders return home for the weekend). As the breakfast session proceeded, staff were updating handover books that then go with the boarders into the school day, and then home to keep parents informed of all developments.

The boarders were all welcoming to me and chatted with me about their current situation, plans for the weekend and their plans in general for life. One reflected upon having secured a place at college, reflected upon his 18<sup>th</sup> birthday party and has begun football coaching. Others were happily engaged in sensory activities, or using iPads. Another explained that the family were attending a wedding at the weekend, and one more was keen to discuss the following week and the choice of takeaway that was being selected for that particular evening.

In all respects the breakfast period had the feeling of an extended family preparing for a day at school and then going home for the weekend. There was a supportive community feel that has been created in a short space of time, and that reflects the parental feedback that is detailed above.

#### **Summary of Visit and Quality of Provision**

This visit illustrated to me that the default setting for many of the staff at Southview, and for the Leadership in particular, is one of reflective evolution. There is a determination to see the high quality support on offer maintained, enhanced and spread to impact as many pupils as possible, and the detailed planning to this effect is a key part of this evaluation. The parents that I spoke to once again affirmed the high level impact that the View is having and the aspiration to see the spreading of this impact to as wide a group as is possible is a noble and worthy aim.

I continue to be impressed by the resolve to support learners and families that I see each visit and I am looking forward to returning after Easter to support George and the team further in this work. My thanks to all boarders and staff and my wishes for a Happy Easter break.

Name: Mark Goode

Date: 31/03/2025

#### RECOMMENDATIONS AND/OR RESPONSE FOR THIS VISIT

Actions	Comments from Provider	Expected Completion Date
<p><b><u>Completion of the Profiling exercise</u></b> For the Head of Care to complete the profiling exercise as started to enable informed decisions and scheduling to take place for who can and should experience the View.</p> <p><b><u>SCCIF (Outstanding Criteria): The overall experiences and progress of children</u></b> Research-informed practice, some of which may be innovative, continues to develop from a strong and confident base, making an exceptional difference to children's experiences and progress.</p>		Term 5 2024-25
<p><b><u>Sharing of the forward plans for 2025-26</u></b> For the Head of Care to have the next phase of forward planning available during my next visit in term 5.</p> <p><b><u>SCCIF (Outstanding Criteria): The overall experiences and progress of children</u></b> Professional practice consistently exceeds the standard of good and results in sustained improvement to the lives of children. Professional practice responds positively to children's complex and changing needs. There are examples of excellent practice that are worthy of wider dissemination.</p>		Term 5 2024-25

#### Head of Residential Care's Comments

Thanks Mark for all your feedback and recommendations to improve The View. It was good to share with you our plans around our new admission plans for the next School year and how this will be managed and organised. The kind feedback you have given about your observation of the Breakfast period is very reassuring for us as a provision as we strive to make their time at The View 'purposeful' as possible. It is also reassuring to hear that our parents are seeing an impact back at home as we want the skills that the students are learning here at The View, to also be brought home and be impactful there. I am very happy with the direction we are going and the Staff team are all doing a great job in promoting The Views ethos around the School.

Name: George Walklett

Date: 02.04.25

#### Head Teachers' Comments

Thank you Mark for your detailed report. I would particularly echo the reflective practice now embedded in the leadership of The View and the constant striving to ensure the provision is the best it possibly can be. We have now formally adopted the Diamond Model to inform and support practice and this has been very positively received. The planning arrangements from September are very tight which allows for a thorough and bespoke

package to be put into place for students, together with all the necessary medical training and support our students need.

**Name: Julian Cochrane**

**Date: 24.04.25**

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

**Name: David Beardwell**

**Date:**