



Standard 3 Visit

Name of Service	Southview
Date of previous visit	18/01/2024 saw a Pre-Visit ahead of the opening of the residential service. This constituted of a collaborative supportive review against the National Minimum Standards prior to a pre-opening visit undertaken by OFSTED
Date of this visit	21/03/2024
Standard 3 Visitor	Mark Goode
Time of visit	13.30
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 2023).

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 is 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 stood at the start of this visit, the opening of The View took place on Monday 11th March 2024 for 2 residents, and this visit took place towards the end of the second week of operational status of the Residential Service.

During this visit I undertook an extensive consultation alongside the Head of Care, reviewed a range of paperwork to evaluate progress since the recent visit that I undertook and the subsequent pre-opening visit undertaken by OFSTED. I also spoke to and spent time with the boarders and staff during the residential evening, and made calls to the parents of both boarders to undertake consultations.

Areas requiring action from previous visit		
Action Point from Previous Visit	Provider's Response	Discussion
<p>This is the first Standard 3 visit of Platinum Care to 'The View' following the opening of the service on the 11th March 2024. There had been no formal discreet recommendations that were made outside of the detailed review of the National Minimum Standards that I undertook alongside the Head of Care in January. As a result, the intention of this follow up was to review the status of the setup in the light of the feedback that had been received during the pre-opening visit from OFSTED, and subsequent organisational setup that is now in place.</p> <p>The Head of Care explained that the pre-visit from OFSTED had been a very positive experience. In reflecting upon this it was clear that the Head of Care had created a detailed folder of evidence that included the reflective audit of the National Minimum Standards that we had completed together and that this was considered strong practice by the visiting inspector.</p> <p>It is now being held as a live document, and the Head of Care explained that all work that is undertaken against each of the standards is being stored therein. I suggested that this is a very simple and effective way of navigating this process and acts as a live action plan/evidence base. We discussed the requirements of Standard 3.4, and the need for "The headteacher (or school equivalent), governing body, trustees, or proprietor to 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". It was my suggestion that this folder of evidence is a very effective way of gathering this into a record of this, and that it would be worth considering a relevant leader (the Principal or the Allocated Governor for Residential) conducting a crucial review of this evidence between September and December of 2024 as this will be around a year since opening.</p> <p>In terms of specific feedback from the OFSTED Inspector in the visit, the only notable piece of advice concerned making adaptations to doors for boarders' bedrooms as they were considered heavy. This has been undertaken and evidence of this recorded in the folder. The Head of Care explained that there was likely to be an inspection within the first 2 terms of operational status, and he is keen to ensure that all systems are on track asap.</p> <p>The remainder of this visit details how the mandatory checks and other elements have been covered to support this aspiration.</p>		

Mandatory Areas for Standard 3 – Pre-Visit Status or Statement of Intent	
Topic	Comments
Records of attendance/ exclusion/ missing episodes 20.9	As this is a first visit, the attendance component and its impact based upon Residential is a new feature for Southview, but I enquired about the prior attendance at school for the two initial residents and was informed that from 1 st January until the date of this visit this stands at 98% and 100%. There have also been no instances of either resident going missing or being excluded from Residential.
Complaints 19.1, 19.2, 19.3	There have been no examples of complaints related to the Residential setup. The opposite is in fact the case. Please refer to the consultations section for the detailed feedback obtained through the consultations I have undertaken related to this termly Standard 3 visit.
Sanctions 20.6	During this Standard 3 visit I enquired about this aspect, and whilst it was considered unlikely that this would be a feature for these residents (and so it has proved so far), the Head of Care discussed the fact that this may not always be the case, and I suggested the creation of a log to stand ready for any such instances.

Restraint (including restrictive interventions) 20.3, 20.4, 20.5, 20.6, 20.7	<p>In a similar vein to the premise described related to sanctions, restraint of any sort is both discouraged at Southview, and was considered extremely unlikely for these residents. Thus far this has proven to be the case, but there is a log kept and this will remain the case.</p>
Placement Plans 7.2 Risk Assessments Appendix B (11,16)	<p>During this Standard 3 visit the Head of Care shared the planning process that has been undertaken for the boarders, and explained that all pupils in the school have a detailed Healthcare plan in place that is centrally created and updated by the school Head Nurse.</p> <p>These plans have been used and added to with visits to family homes to meet parents and residents, consideration of the EHCP that is held for the residents, and from all of this information a placement plan is created. This contains a detailed 1-page biography of the boarders that contains a lot of key information and a personal support strategy that explains things that work to support the boarders effectively in different environments. The information acts as a baseline and is added to during stays through regular updates (every 2 weeks) through meetings between key workers and the residents. This is designed to closely capture progress that has been being made.</p> <p>The information held also contains very detailed risk assessments for all pupils and all activities. The only caveat to undiluted praise in these initial systems is ensuring that staff have the time to complete the paperwork demands as numbers increase.</p> <p>All of this detail supports the targets that are generated, tracked thoroughly and fed into a live recording system during shifts when staff are working overnight.</p> <p>This is a very impressive working methodology and has already produced clear evidence of progress against targets. The Head of Care went on to explain how these targets are tracked alongside teaching staff (please see consultations section for this detail).</p>
How well Children and Young People are Safeguarded.	
<p>The Head of Care and I scrutinised the recording system for Safeguarding incidents at the school, and it was clear that any alerts that are raised for any pupil at the school generate an alert for the Head of Care as a DSL.</p> <p>There have been no safeguarding issues raised related to the residential cohort, and when the Head of Care undertook a deep search in the recording system it was clear that this has never been a feature for these residents. That having been said, we examined the system together and I am happy to state that there is strong oversight and I have no concerns about safeguarding at Southview as a result.</p> <p>In addition, the Head of Care explained that he has recently attended the Essex Safeguarding conference that was attended by the LADO there. At this the local offer referral worthiness process was examined related to thresholds and practical scenarios. This has since been shared with all DSLs at the school.</p>	

Suitability of the building, furnishings & external environment.

The Residential setup is a brand new premises that has only been being used for under 2 weeks. It therefore retains the feel of a new building. That having been said, I was struck by how 'at home' the two residents feel already, and this was confirmed by the way they have personalised their rooms with pictures and bedding of their choice.

The adaptations suggested by the OFSTED pre-visit related to the weighted and spring loaded doors have been made, and the Head of Care explained adjustments to the kitchen area to make food preparation by boarders easier to access. In discussion we considered the placement of whiteboards and the use of iPad menus to see boarders use cookery to support literacy and numeracy learning and link to school targets (see the consultation section with the Head of Care for more details as to the rationale behind this).

The premises are beginning to feel homely based on the boarders having safes in their rooms for belongings, pin boards on the walls for their pictures, and use of PECS and other pictures to detail the plans for evenings and weekly menus. There is a staff and residents' information area that details key aspects and interests of all members of residential and this is a really nice feature. The Snug has been purposed to support calls and video contact with families as well. This is an accessible but private space and works very well.

The full operational status of the alarms system has been completed, and elements including the voice activated alert system is now operational (but has not been required for the first 2 residents and has been disabled in their rooms). Overall the premises are really intelligently designed and the staff are beginning to adapt use to meet the needs of the pupils very well.

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

As this was a first visit whilst the Residential Operation is open the discussion ranged across quite a wide spectrum of elements:

Evidence Folder related to the National Minimum Standards and Reporting to Governors/Principal

As stated higher up this report, the Head of Care and I discussed how the initial NMS review can be built upon to support ongoing review of the Residential Setup. The organisational approach that has been taken in opening the Residential Setup means that systems have already got a rigour that is very comprehensive. The Head of Care has taken a meticulous approach to evaluating the 27 areas of the standards and is holding a very detailed and comprehensive evidence base for the work that has been undertaken. It is important that this is maintained and extended as each area is worked through, and we discussed the part that can be played by the staff and the governors in this process through sharing the awareness of this process with the staff teams, and by targeting governor visits to report upon developments in key areas as they take place. I suggested that a planned programme of governor visits to assess certain standards, or areas of standards may be a way to help this process as the first inspection and the possible annual review point of December 2024 nears.

Building towards Inspection and going beyond the National Minimum Standards

As I speculated in the pre-visit that I undertook in January, the methodical approach being taken by the Head of Care means that many areas of the NMS are already covered off, and the fact that there was only 1 supportive recommendation from OFSTED in their pre-visit suggests the same.

I therefore began discussing how inspection will look and exemplified the SCCIF audit tool that I referenced in my last report for the Head of Care. It is clear to me that Southview is a school with high standards and that the approach taken to devise and plan the Residential setup is of an equally high standard. We considered a few of the constituent statements for both 'good' and 'outstanding' practice across the different key areas of the Social Care Common Inspection Framework together and it was evident that there are examples of evidence of the highest standards in place already.

As a result, I would advocate the use of the audit tool that I have shared with the Head of Care to RAG rate the evidence held, and create a working action plan to go well past minimum standards and whole heartedly seek to prove outstanding status at the earliest opportunity. I would be happy to support this process over the coming terms.

Staffing Considerations

The Head of Care explained to me that the staffing situation is currently that there are 4 staff split into 2 shifts (evening and night) and that they do 2 of each as a team each week. The Head of Care is the absence backup at present, and there is a school TA that is helping evening shifts as well. There are obvious plans to see numbers grow in time, and when this happens it will be important to factor in capacity. The Head of Care told me that there are plans to see the roll increase to 4, and add 2 more staff as this happens. This gradual embedding of systems as numbers and staff grow is a very sensible approach to take in my view, and things have started smoothly as a result of this graduated approach.

Targets, monitoring, and working alongside school staff.

As we discussed the monitoring and review systems, paperwork and purpose it has become clear that the setup at Southview is very high quality in terms of information being gathered and reviewed. There is a 'Pathway Plan Journey' system in place that takes the targets that are in place (and agreed with parents), and sees evidence captured by staff twice weekly. This is supported by evidence such as photographs on Class Dojo that parents can view and make comments upon.

This sees a tracking system based upon targets that is based in 3 strands: Primary Health, Healthy Lifestyle, Emotional Wellbeing. These are all reflected upon by boarders in simple questions and answers that help to embed the learning that takes place.

The Head of Care also explained that the intention is for him to meet teachers once every two weeks to feedback events in the Residential setup, and I encouraged him to consider how the impact of this process could theoretically be connected more directly to EHCP review processes. We discussed the way targets are set, and I suggested considering how the Residential Setup may be able to contribute to general learning targets for school and EHCP processes, as well as for the Residential targets that exist.

Review of Website Overview of 'The View'

The Southview School Website contains a link to a comprehensive overview of the Residential Setup that speaks of the high aspirations for the impact it can have and provides some images of the premises as it stood before any boarders joined. It may soon be prudent to start including some testimonials and features that illustrate that The View is an operational setup that is having an impact.

There is also a link to a statement of purpose that is very detailed. I would advocate a check now be made of the status of this related to the components that were identified in the pre-visit NMS Audit:

- Considering a child friendly or PECS version of the statement for pupils that require it.
- Provision for hearing/visual impairment/non literate YPs to be considered and captured in the children's statement.
- Consider including or referencing a typical schedule/day/week in the SOP or Guide.
- Consider adding in how Key worker sessions are to be used to support termly reviews and parental involvement as a part of the SOP.

Time spent in the Residential Environment with Staff and Boarders

During this visit I spent a productive and extended period alongside the staff and boarders to capture their feelings about their time in The View so far.

Both boarders were able to explain that they have been attending the school for a number of years and that attending the Residential Setup is aimed at helping them. They were both able to explain the key skills areas that they are working on, and both said that the residential setup (and the staff) are helping them to do this. They both explained their own targets, and the fact that they have been undertaking a range of life skills tasks such as cooking, cleaning, washing, hoovering and mopping.

In addition, they both told me that they are enjoying the residential experience so far, and they feel that it is helping them to achieve the areas that they have been targeting.

The boarders were very happy to chat to me and explain the fact that they enjoy the stays, as well as telling me that they like knowing what they are going to do each evening, and reflected upon their favourite activities so far, as well as the most enjoyable meal they have made and had.

During the evening that I visited the boarders were keen to explain that it was 'take-away night' and they were excited to be a part of the process of travelling to and ordering the takeaway with staff support. They were also engaged in an animated and good natured debate about which film to watch later – after a few chores have been undertaken and planned for. The visit took place on a Thursday, and both were able to explain that the key task the next day would be related to washing bedding.

The most noticeable feature of the discussions was the closeness that already exists between the boarders and the staff in The View. There is a 'supportive older sibling' feel to the relationships that I observed, and the willingness to try to do the tasks was a standout feature with one of the boarders making drinks for all staff, including myself.

Consultations with parents of both boarders

In the days that followed my Standard 3 visit to Southview I spoke at length to the parents of both boarders and they were both full of praise for the way things have started. It was very clear that this is a new venture for both families and that there was a degree of nervousness about it to begin with.

Both families explained that the process of induction and information gathering has been well-organised and extremely thorough (a notion that I concur with). The detail was explained in some depth by one of the parents who admitted to some nerves, but stated that the support given to parents in navigating the process was first class.

Both families were full of positive comments about the quality of communications, and cited the development of independence as being a key reason behind the decision to board. One stating that a key aim has been to ensure that their child knows there is a life beyond home and what it could look like in time.

Both explained that the boarders are enjoying the residential setup, and are excited to go, and perhaps most crucially, both stated that they could not praise the staff highly enough so far, that there has already been a noticeable impact in terms of targets being achieved both in school and at home.

One parent stated that their child was more willing to help out at home after 1 week of boarding, and another commented that it was 'mind-blowing' to note what had been achieved and that they cannot quite believe what has been managed in such a short space of time. Both made positive comments related to the class Dojo setup and neither had any concerns that they wanted to raise.

Summary of Visit and Quality of Provision

As first Standard 3 visits of a new provider are concerned, this was a very positive one. The boarders have settled well into a very well-resourced and spacious, yet increasingly homely environment alongside dedicated and methodical staff that are having a high level impact already. The care I observed was of a high standard based upon very strong information gathering and record keeping, and the boarders and parents are most impressed with things. I am grateful to the Head of Care and staff for their welcome and openness in this visit. I reserve my deepest thanks however for the 2 boarders that welcomed me so warmly into their space and shared things so happily.

I am already looking forward to returning next term and I would like to wish everyone a Happy Easter holiday.

Name: Mark Goode

Date: 23/03/2024

RECOMMENDATIONS AND/OR RESPONSE FOR THIS VISIT

Actions	Comments from Provider	Expected Completion Date
<p><u>National Minimum Standards Evidence</u> For the detailed NMS folder to be kept up to date and a record of evidence added to over time. For alignment with governor visits, and for the comments related to the website contents/statement of purpose to be considered also.</p> <p><u>SCCIF (Outstanding Criteria): The Effectiveness of Leaders and Managers</u> Leaders and managers know their strengths and weaknesses well and can provide evidence of improvement over a sustained period.</p>		

<p><u>Target Monitoring</u> For the Head of Care to consider how best the targets and feedback can work alongside school staff to support boarders' progress holistically.</p> <p><u>SCCIF (Good Criteria): The Overall Experiences and Progress of Children</u> Children attend school or other educational provision. They are learning and making good progress, taking account of their starting points. Staff are ambitious for children and support them to attend and do well in their education. There is effective liaison between the boarding provision, teaching staff and headteacher.</p>		
<p><u>SCCIF Audit Tool</u> For consideration to be given to RAG rating the residential service against the SCCIF Inspection tool from an early stage to mean that the embedding and continual review of systems proceeds in a way that supports high standards from an early stage.</p> <p><u>SCCIF (Outstanding Criteria): The Effectiveness of Leaders and Managers</u> Leaders and managers create a culture of aspiration and positivity. They have high expectations of their staff to change and improve the lives of the children they are responsible for.</p>		

Head of Residential Care's Comments

Name:
Date:

Head Teachers' Comments

Name:
Date:

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

Name:
Date:

