



Standard 3 Visit

Name of Service	Linden Lodge School
Date of previous visit	08.01.2026
Date of this visit	25.02.2026
Standard 3 Visitor	Mark Goode
Time of visit	14.45 - 17.15
Visit Supported by	Sarah Norris: Co-Headteacher responsible for Residential Danny Sinclair: Head of Residential Childcare Manager Vicky Watson: Deputy Residential Childcare Manager Head of Residential

About the Independent Visitor

Visiting the residential provision today is Mark Goode. Mark has worked in the Education sector for the past 25 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 (SCCIF (04/09/25), NMS (05/09/2022)).

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.**

There is also an intention to review other thematic areas in discussion with the school:

- **The evaluation of the effectiveness of the care provided to children and whether they are safeguarded.**
- **An assessment of the physical condition of the building, furniture, and equipment of the School.**

During visits opportunities are also taken to:

- **Provide opportunities for any child or member of staff who wishes to meet me (in private if they wish).**
- **Carry out observations of the care provided, or systems being used.**

Introduction and Context for this visit

Linden Lodge is a day and residential Special Needs School for pupils with Vision and Sensory Impairment. It occupies a 3-acre campus close to the centre of London and has a range of specialist departments. The school roll has not changed significantly since my last visit.

I arrived for this visit on a Wednesday afternoon, in the first week of the fourth half term of the academic year, and was greeted by the Co-Head for Residential, the Head of Residential and the Deputy Residential Childcare Manager. We discussed events surrounding the Residential service and undertook all mandatory updates. I was informed that there had been an OFSTED Inspection of the Residential Service that had taken place since the point of my last Standard 3 visit in term 3. The Inspection had been considered a success, and although the draft has been received by the school, it has yet to be published.

I undertook a detailed consultation with the leaders as well as touring the Residential Service and spending time alongside staff and boarders. The reflections made are captured in the consultations section below. I also contacted a number of parents in the days that followed the visit to gather their views, and these are also showcased in the relevant consultations section below.

Areas requiring action from previous visit

Action Point from Previous Visit	Provider's Response and Verification by Independent Visitor
<p><u>Updated Paperwork Processes</u> To prepare a selection of Risk Assessments, Care Plans, and any adjusted Key Worker Session processes for my next visit in term 4.</p>	<p><u>Response</u> Selection of Risk Assessments, Care Plans, and adjusted Key Worker Session will be available for Mark to see at his next visit. Mark will see training staff have received.</p> <p><u>Verification in this visit</u> This visit saw me review a sample of Care Plans and the accompanying Risk Assessments, as well as discussing key worker session recording and how staff have recently received training. The details are captured in the consultations section below.</p>
<p><u>Planning for Imminent Leavers</u> For the Leaders to prepare to share details of planning for likely leavers in the course of the next visit I undertake in term 4.</p>	<p><u>Response</u> Next step plans for our leavers will be available for Mark to see on his visit. Mark will be shown case study of the young people's progress.</p> <p><u>Verification in this visit</u> Once again, this was discussed with the Residential Leaders and the detail is captured in the consultations section below.</p>

How well Children and Young People are Safeguarded.

The Leaders explained that there have been no other issues of concern internally or requiring the support of external agencies related to the boarding cohort since my last visit in term 3. We discussed the recent events for boarders and through this, as well as the positive feedback given related to support for boarders and families from

OFSTED, I remain of the view that the care given remains as strong as I have become accustomed to in my time visiting the school. I therefore have no concerns following this visit related to safeguarding at Linden Lodge.

Mandatory Areas	
Topic	Comments
Records of attendance/ exclusion/ missing episodes 20.9	During this visit the Residential Lead explained that there have again been no missing episodes and no exclusions since the last Standard 3 visit in term 3. Attendance figures for Boarders since my last visit in term 6 of last year have averaged at 91.7% for boarders, with a corresponding figure for day pupils of 85%. These attendance figures remain more positive for boarders, indicating a positive impact.
Complaints 19.1, 19.2, 19.3	The Head of Residential explained that there have been no formal complaints since the date of my last visit in term 3. The interactions between staff and boarders, as well as the strong response to the Fire Alarm (detailed below) illustrates boarders truly trust staff, and as such complaints remain extremely unlikely in my view.
Health and Safety Checks: Specifically, Fire Safety in this visit	This visit saw me observe a scheduled and unannounced (to staff and boarders) Fire Drill. This was conducted by the Manager in charge of the Site, alongside the leaders of Residential and was completed with the minimum of fuss by all staff and boarders. They progressed quickly and calmly to the muster point away from the building, and the Head of Residential explained that this took a total of just under 2½ minutes. There is set to be a review of the event that I will review in term 5.
Sanctions 20.6	I was once again informed that there have been no sanctions applied since my last visit in term 3. The time that I spent in the boarding space alongside staff and boarders saw high quality care and proportionate levels of support that empowered boarders wherever possible to be independent. This generally means that sanctions are not needed in my opinion.
Restraint (including restrictive interventions) 20.3, 20.4, 20.5, 20.6, 20.7	There have been no incidents since my last visit in term 3 that have required restraint or restrictive intervention. I remain of the opinion that there is very little likelihood of such events taking place based upon the interactions I observed in this visit.
Risk Assessments Appendix B (11,16)	During this visit I discussed the review processes for the oversight and reviews of all care plans and risk assessments once again. I then undertook a scrutiny of a sample, including the most recently arrived boarder. The plans that I reviewed demonstrated extremely strong levels of detail, laid out in such a way that staff have a very good understanding of the needs of all boarders. This comes from close collaboration with families and regular reviews. The leaders fed back that the recent Ofsted Inspection saw feedback given that stated that each boarder's story was told well, and that plans were designed to be bespoke. Risk is clearly evaluated and understood, and as such processes and support are well aligned. I noted how this translated into the provision of dietary information at dinner using placemats that are designed for each boarder. This is one simple but important example of how the planning sees seamless care take place as a result of the work of staff.
Placement Plans 7.2	(This content is shared with the previous row's comment)

Suitability of the building, furnishings & external environment.

During this Standard 3 visit I once again moved through the entire Residential Provision at Richley House and am happy to confirm the high standard of maintenance of all areas remains the same. The leaders stated that, following the OFSTED Inspection, and also as part of regular maintenance, that sections of the corridors are being readied for updating, , but this will take place at the time the new Cinema is installed (hopefully to be started in April 2026). This is set to see some older equipment moved, and whilst being developed, the spaces that are unused will see some adaptations (sensory space and two of the leaders set to share an office for a time to

minimise impact upon boarders' spaces) The entrance hall has a very high quality display themed around the different countries and where people live, it is planned for the spot lights to be updated. The premises continue to support boarders and staff well as a comfortable and familiar setting for all concerned.

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 Co-Headteacher, Head of Residential and Deputy Residential Childcare Manager

This visit saw the following areas discussed with the leaders of the Residential Service:

Boarding Cohort and Staffing:

I was informed that a new boarder has begun attending recently and that new appointments are being organised through recruitment processes. There is set to be a departing staff member from the Residential Team, and the appointment of a new team leader, a new waking night staff member. I spoke to the departing staff member as a part of this visit and the decision to leave is purely related to personal circumstances – the working relationship remains strong.

Recent OFSTED Inspection reflections:

The Leaders explained that the recent inspection was a smooth experience and that the progress being made by boarders was commented upon as a strong feature. The staff expressed that they felt pride in the way the boarders advocated for themselves and that the Inspection team could see clear evidence of strong support and advocacy for all, including non-verbal boarders. The outward facing nature of the staff was a further validation of recent efforts, as was an extremely valuable reflection from OFSTED over the way a recent staff member has been supported into work. The Inspection team were full of praise after the feedback received and this is to the school's great credit.

Post-Ofsted debrief and considerations:

Leaders updated me as to discussions that have been held since the Inspection and the following areas were explained as next steps that are considered important:

- Giving Residential Pupils the opportunity to invite friends that are day pupils to lunch in Richley House – this is intended for social skills development; consideration is being given as to how best facilitate this.
- Updating documentation processes to ensure that scanned versions of some paperwork always matches the hard copies held in the Residential Offices. This may lead to an audit of existing plans/paperwork held.

Connection to St Piers' School, Lingfield.

The connection to St Piers' school that has been established has seen several supportive sessions take place and this is a positive element of collaboration.

Connection to Oak Lodge School, Balham.

The connection to the Head of Care at Oak Lodge remains a focus and the Head of Residential is in touch related to how best to develop this.

Leavers' planning

The Leaders and I discussed recent events, and it is clear that the 5 imminent leavers for the summer are all in slightly different stages of planning. What is very clear however, is that all are being supported well by the Residential Staff towards college placements, supported living or college places. One such case was discussed after the cessation of boarding by the local authority in question. This learner has remained a day pupil, but the boarding experience has been a key part of learning, and as such the Residential Staff are a key feature in the planning for next steps. This was commented upon by the Inspection team from the recent OFSTED as a very

positive element. There are no concerns after this review of ongoing support as it is clear that proactive and early support meetings are taking place, and I look forward to hearing more about plans as the year progresses.

Residential Pet

Leaders informed me that funding has been secured for a Bearded Dragon as a pet. This has also been accompanied by boarders creating a Mural that will be placed where the pet is positioned in the building. I hope to be able to see this in a subsequent visit.

Other elements discussed

- There was a recent Valentine's Ball event that was joined up with afterschool club that was enjoyed by boarders.
- The recent staff Inset day saw staff undertake Team Teach training, Paediatric First Aid and a course related to supporting young people with hearing loss. All were practical and hands on courses that staff enjoyed and gained a lot from that relates well to the support they give to boarders.
- Key Worker Sessions have seen updates in the way they are written. I scrutinised the details and it is clear that greater detail is captured related to the way goals and progress are captured. This may see additional work alongside St Piers' staff in due course as well.
- Planning has begun for the annual camping trip and summer scheme. There are some adaptations that are set to be incorporated that will see events brought to the site that is used as a means to maximising the experiences, and limit travel time.
- Termly trips and risk assessments were explained – with local shopping being considered for a number of boarders after they have requested certain foods.

Time spent with Boarders and Staff

During the visit I spent time in both Residential floors alongside the many boarders, different staff and the leaders of the Residential Service. The time spent saw me interact with a number of the boarders in various ways. On the first floor this coincided with the boarders starting and enjoying their evening meal. This saw detailed dietary and support arrangements outlined on individualised placemats, and I noted the confidence with which the boarders self-advocated with staff, and between themselves as a group of friends. Staff support was always at hand, but not always needed. This echoes the comments shared from the OFSTED Feedback.

On the ground floor I noted a staff led Music session in which the non-verbal members of boarding were playing instruments as the staff member led the session. This saw the interactions captured by staff for sharing with families and as progress evidence. The Head of Residential also pointed out acoustic pads that have been installed in this area as a means to improve the way sound travels. This has been commented upon by staff and is a useful feature.

There were also boarders enjoying the garden space and play area as the weather was better than has been the case recently. The sensible all-weather arrangements, and strong maintenance of the space has meant that the recent very wet spell has not impacted the availability of this space in any significant way.

Parental Consultation undertaken in the days after this visit

In the days that followed this visit I reached out to the parents of two boarders to capture their views on the residential service. The details that I have been able to gather are summarised as follows:

The first parent explained that her son suffered a break in a bone in his leg and was withdrawn from boarding for a period of recuperation. Recently the boarder has resumed attending Richley House, and the parent explained

that resuming boarding has been important as the independence that is being developed is an important area of development.

The parent also explained that over the past 2 years a sense of trust and real value has been developed in the school and the Residential Service. The parent commented that the boarder rarely stays away from home other than in the Residential Service and this is because the staff really understand the care needed. After the recent event, there has been a need for strong collaboration between home, school and the Residential Service and the parent has been impressed with this work.

The staff communication, responsiveness and the fact that there is ready access to Physiotherapy and Nursing support were all cited as strengths of the service and the parent raised no concerns at all. This is in the context of the recent health issue that is explained above, and makes the case that the school, and Residential Service, is truly valued for the hard work and awareness that staff have.

By the time of the completion of this report I have been unable to reach the second parent, in spite of numerous attempts being made.

Thematic Areas	
Standard/SCCIF Reference	Evidence / Observation
	None undertaken at this visit.

Summary of Visit and Quality of Provision

This visit took place in the aftermath of a further annual Ofsted Inspection, that whilst unpublished at the time of the completion of this report, was affirmation of the high standards in place in the Residential Care at Linden Lodge that were again clearly on show in the course of this visit. This has since seen the Leaders reflect carefully on how to take further strides to ensure the standards are maintained, a key feature of the reflective leadership in place. This is a key reason that the support at Linden Lodge remains strong over time in my view.

I would like to thank everyone at Linden Lodge for their welcome in this visit, and I look forward to my next visit in term 5.

Name: Mark Goode **Date:** 02.03.26

RECOMMENDATIONS AND/OR RESPONSE FOR THIS VISIT

Actions	Comments from Provider	Expected Completion Date
<p><u>Leadership Actions</u> To implement the reflections made since the recent Ofsted Inspection and ensure evidence is gathered, and that the monitoring reviews (SCCIF Audit and NMS Review) capture these elements as time passes.</p> <p><u>SCCIF (Outstanding Criteria)</u> Leaders and managers lead by example, innovate and generate creative ideas to sustain the highest quality care for children.</p>	<p>Evidence will be gathered and included in the SCCIF and monitored.</p> <p>We will continue to innovate and generate creative ideas for the best outcome for our young people and families</p>	Ongoing

Leaders and managers know their strengths and weaknesses well and can provide evidence of improvement over a sustained period.		
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Head of Residential's Comments

Thank you, Mark, for your visit. It was a pleasure to read your report and see how well you captured the work we do with our young people. Your observations reflected how our residential provision continues to evolve and adapt to meet the individual needs of those in our care.

It was encouraging to see the positive way you highlighted staff engagement with the young people and their commitment to understanding and supporting their individual needs.

We are very proud of our young people's achievements and remain committed to building strong, positive relationships with families. As you referenced in your report, supporting one family to help their young person return to boarding following recent health changes was an important example of the collaborative work between staff, families, and professionals to ensure the best outcomes for the young person.

Thank you again for recognising the dedication and efforts of our team.

Name: Danny Sinclair

Date: 3 rd March 2026

Head Teacher's Comments

It is a pleasure to read that all aspects of the information that we have shared is reflected accurately in the practical work that is happening within Richley House. As Co-Head responsible for Residential it is reassuring to see this validation of the practical work, documentation and parental feedback.

Name: Sarah Norris

Date: 6 March 2026

Formal Response from the Governing Body, Trustees, or Proprietor of the School
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It was helpful to read this report. The fact that the report includes the views of pupils and parents adds to the confidence Governors have in the evidence of good quality care and education of residents at Richley House.

The Independent Visitor (IV) witnessed a fire drill and reviewed some risk assessments. It is positive that the IV concurs with the view set out in the recent inspection that children are well known by staff and that risk is well understood and managed.

Governors will continue to review the IV reports and the progress with plans made and reviewed by the IV when the reports of the Residential Meetings are tabled at the Governors meetings.

Name: Kieran Travers

Date: 17/03/2026
