



Standard 3 Visit

Name of Service	Linden Lodge School
Date of previous visit	19.11.2025
Date of this visit	08.01.2026
Standard 3 Visitor	Mark Goode
Time of visit	14.45 – 18.30
Visit Supported by	Sarah Norris: Co-Headteacher responsible for Residential Danny Sinclair: 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 Thursday afternoon, in the early part of the third half term of the academic year, and was greeted by the Co-Head for Residential. We discussed events surrounding the Residential service and undertook updates as far as possible related to the mandatory checks. I was informed that the current boarding cohort stands at roughly 21, which has risen recently after the return of a boarder that had been undergoing some medical treatment. There has been training updated for therapy and other staff related to supporting this boarder with manual handling arrangements. This was later seen in action during the visit and it was clear that the close liaison with family has been important in this process. I was also informed that another boarder has seen their stays increase from 1 to 2 per week. We discussed considering how occupancy figures are captured – potentially as a % of the available evenings for each. I agreed to move this forward in the next visit.

I then undertook an extended time alongside the boarders on both floors, including enjoying dinner with the boarders on the 1st floor. The reflections made are captured in the consultations section below. Part way through dinner the Head of Residential returned for the remainder of the overnight shift and we then undertook a final consultation and covered the remaining areas of the mandatory checks.

Areas requiring action from previous visit

Action Point from Previous Visit	Provider's Response and Verification by Independent Visitor
<p><u>Key Worker Session Processes</u> To consider connecting the feedback on the key worker sessions to the link-up with St Piers' school in terms of how the sessions are constructed.</p>	<p><u>Response following this visit</u> We will contact St Piers and get feedback, on keyworker sessions.</p> <p><u>Verification in this visit</u> The Head of Residential explained that preparatory work has been undertaken to evolve the session recording methods and make them more personalised to the communication needs of the boarders in an individualised fashion. These are set to be a point for further discussion when the meeting with St Piers takes place. I will look to review the output of this when I return in term 4.</p>
<p><u>Parental Feedback</u> To consider the feedback as presented in the parental calls in this report.</p>	<p><u>Response following this visit</u> Parental feedback is important to us, we ensure we follow-up with parents and address and support and advice they may need. We will continue to have regular meetings with other professional and partner agencies.</p> <p><u>Verification in this visit</u> This was discussed in this visit, and I have absolutely no concerns related to the way Linden Lodge supports families and responds to any circumstances after the discussions held.</p>

How well Children and Young People are Safeguarded.

The Co-Headteacher explained a recent sequence of events that has seen the school supporting families and has required home visits and liaison with supportive external services when concerns rise. The detail shared with me illustrated the high level support that is a trademark of Linden Lodge School. Support that has been brought to bear has resulted in the school having been reassured over safety and has been exemplar in my view.

The Head of Residential informed me 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 1. We discussed the recent events for boarders and through this, I remain of the view that the care given remains as clearly focussed upon the best interests of the boarders as I have come to expect. I 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 2. Attendance figures for Boarders since my last visit in term 6 of last year have averaged at 93.6% for boarders, with a corresponding figure for day pupils of 81.8%. These attendance figures remain more positive for boarders, indicating that boarding continues to help attendance. This is an important impact and demonstrates the increased accessibility of education that is brought to bear by attending boarding. The figure is also an increased one compared to that noted in the term 2 visit.
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 2. The positivity that was evident in the interactions I noted during my visit is a clear indication that complaints are extremely unlikely in my view.
Health and Safety Checks: Specifically, Fire Safety in this visit	This visit saw no checks made related to Health and Safety.
Sanctions 20.6	I was once again informed that there have been no sanctions applied since my last visit in term 2. The time that I spent in the boarding space alongside staff and boarders saw great levels of sensitivity on display related to care and support. This precludes the likelihood of sanctions being needed in my experience.
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 2 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. The plans and Risk Assessments are in the process of a deep level review and will then be shared with parents for their approval. The senior Residential Leaders are set to quality assure the process and I agreed to scrutinise the outcome in the course of my next visit.
Placement Plans 7.2	
Suitability of the building, furnishings & external environment.	
<p>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. The seasonal display in the entrance area has been changed once again, and I noted the focus on Human Rights in the different floors as an example of the way work is kept relevant.</p> <p>The Head of Residential then explained that the medical room has been updated and made more spacious after a visit to another provision – this has made it more user friendly for all.</p> <p>The premises continues to support boarders and staff well. It is comfortable and familiar to boarders. Who are happy to move through it both with support and on their own – which is a mark of the strength of the provision in empowering those with sensory impairments as well as it does.</p>	

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:

Update related to Cinema Development

The conversion of the allocated space to become the Cinema is on target for April 26. Suppliers are all in place, and equipment is all ready.

Staffing:

I was informed that recent appointments have seen a full and part time waking night staff member join the team. These staff have yet to start but I also met a member of the HR staff who explained the importance of the correct appointments to all roles. This is reassuring and the appointments themselves are related to increased numbers, which is positive.

Connection to St Piers' School, Lingfield.

The connection to St Piers' school that has been established is set to see a meeting soon that will have as part of its focus the evolution of key worker sessions.

Connection to Oak Lodge School, Balham.

The recently appointed Head of Care at Oak Lodge is set to visit soon, having been forced to cancel a visit owing to illness. This is a positive element of the service's constant reflection and self-evaluation.

Connections in the South London Community and other events of note

The Leaders explained that families visited professional football clubs over the Christmas period, with a highlight being explained as a match watched from a charity executive box. This was greatly enjoyed by the family in question, and was explained when I spoke to one of the boarders over dinner.

The Leaders also explained that a Christmas Choir had visited the school and been enjoyed by all just before the Christmas Break, and that there had been a Christmas Meal held for all boarders with the support of the visiting Scout Master.

Leavers' planning

The Leaders and I discussed recent events for a boarder, whose residential funding was ceased abruptly by the supporting local authority. This was viewed as very disappointing, but the Head of Residential explained that weekly support meetings have continued from the Residential Team to the boarder to support the transition process (as he is a day student now). We agreed to discuss the processes for all likely leavers in the course of my next visit.

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. They returned from school and had a period of self-directed activities: some relaxing in the lounges, some spending time in their bedrooms, and others took part in other available activities.

Handover took place from school staff and they remained in the Residential space for a period if needed to help the boarders settle in after their school day. I noted that this period saw one boarder (referenced above) being

helped into their room, and staff were applying their recent training related to hoist use, and manual training. This included a range of staff and the school's therapy team. The quality of the training was clear and impressive.

The activities taking place included sensory music time, piano playing, table football and other activities as requested individually by boarders. The support from staff was evident and comprehensive, including social skills development, use of a diabetes app to monitor one boarder's diet, concentration on tasks (2 played several games of 'Connect 4') and support, if needed, in expressing themselves in conversation with me.

Dinner saw me enjoy Burger, Home Made Chips and Salad alongside a number of staff and boarders. We chatted between us as we ate and the space used enabled this to feel like a family dinner in a readily accessible and familiar space. There was a good deal of conversation about a range of topics, with one boarder very much enjoying entertaining us all with stories and banter. A second boarder shared the fact that her annual review had taken place earlier in the day, and that her fondness for the Residential Service came across as a key feature. There was also some personalised support taking place during the dinner period for one boarder, but once again this was non-invasive and the spacious nature of the dining area meant this was accomplished with ease and minimal disruption of any kind for others.

Following my departure there were a range of activity choices for boarders and they were all empowered to access those of their preference. Overall, it was a very pleasant and social experience with the boarders in this visit and I thank the staff for facilitating the experience for me.

Parental Consultation undertaken in the days after this visit

In the days that followed this visit I spoke to the parent of a boarder that has been attending Linden Lodge School for close to 11 years, and having reached the age of 16, the family decided to attempt boarding around a year ago. The boarder is now 16, and the aims of boarding are to support independence, life skills, social skills with peers and adults, and increase the boarder's confidence in all of these areas.

A further key consideration has been the future in which living outside of family care is felt to be desired, and as the boarder has reached the age they have it was considered important to attempt this.

The results have been very positive with the boarder making firm friends outside of their normal circle in the school (classmates essentially), and has seen them exposed to new peers and adults. The confidence shown by the boarder has risen a great deal, and the parent explained that the family have attended for meals at the school prepared by the boarder and friends. The parent also expressed the view that boarding has helped conversational skills development a great deal as well.

The parent explained that the staff (naming the Head of Residential specifically) really know the boarder and family well, and are very strong communicators, facilitating contact regularly and supporting the next phase of the educational journey in terms of next steps towards college placements very fully as well.

The parent expressed no concerns related to boarding when asked and it is clear that the experience is a very positive one in general.

This parental feedback showcased the fact that support for boarders and families is life changing and very personalised towards individual needs and status. The parent spoken to was full of praise and grateful for the service's support.

Thematic Areas		
Standard/SCCIF Reference	Evidence / Observation	
	None undertaken at this visit.	
Summary of Visit and Quality of Provision		
<p>This was a really positive visit that saw care of an extremely high standard on show, and saw me spend social time with the boarders and staff as I was able to stay and take part in dinner. The relationships and support in place was evident in all aspects that I observed, and the trust between the boarders and the staff team was clear. The parental feedback was also testament to the hard work that is invested consistently.</p> <p>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 4.</p>		
<p>Name: Mark Goode Date: 13.01.26</p>		
RECOMMENDATIONS AND/OR RESPONSE FOR THIS VISIT		
Actions	Comments from Provider	Expected Completion Date
<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>SCCIF (Outstanding Criteria): How well children are helped and protected</u> Professional practice results in sustained improvement to the lives of children. Highly effective planning manages and minimises risks inside and outside of the school.</p>	<p>Selection of Risk Assessments, Care Plans, and adjusted Key Worker Session will be available for Mark to see at his next visit.</p> <p>Mark will see training staff have received.</p>	Term 4 2025-26
<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>SCCIF (Outstanding Criteria): The overall experiences and progress of children</u> There is significant evidence of change and improvement for children because of the actions of the staff working at the school. The progress of children is exceptional, taking into account their starting points.</p>	<p>Next step plans for our leavers will be available for Marks to see on his visit.</p> <p>Mark will be shown case study of the young people's progress.</p>	Term 4 2025-26

Head of Residential's Comments

Thank you, Mark, for visiting and spending time with us. We were pleased to hear that you enjoyed sharing a meal with our young people and that you were able to capture the warm, family atmosphere around the tables.

Creating a strong sense of family is an integral part of our residential provision. We strive to offer a genuine home from home environment where young people feel safe, supported, and able to thrive and enjoy their residential experience.

Thank you also for sharing the parent perspective. It is extremely important to us that parents feel confident in the care and support we provide, and that they feel assured in how well we get to know and support each young person.

We look forward to welcoming you again on your next visit.

Name: Danny Sinclair

Date: 14th January 2026

Head Teacher's Comments

As always it is a pleasure to welcome Mark our Independent Visitor to Richley House but this visit was particularly special as he was able to stay and enjoy a meal with our young people. It was such a delight to see the young people include Mark within all of their activities just after school and also during the meal itself. I would also like to thank Mark for being able to take the time to spend this quality time with our young people and to be able to get a true sense of the homely atmosphere and care and attention that is given to all of our young people at Richley House by our incredibly dedicated, conscientious and committed staff team.

Name: Sarah Norris

Date: 16 January 2026

Formal Response from the Governing Body, Trustees, or Proprietor of the School

As Parent Governor, I have reviewed report and I am reassured that the residential provision is being monitored effectively and in line with statutory requirements.

The visit and review of practice provide assurance that safeguarding arrangements and pupils' welfare remain robust at Linden Lodge and continue to be.

I also noted the parental consultation undertaken, which reported very positive outcomes from boarding, strong relationships with staff, effective communication, and no safeguarding concerns. The new initiatives of indoor cinema are an added incentive and as a result there remains a high level of interest from families. Residential school is becoming a valuable option for the children who need it and their families.

Overall, the report provides confidence that appropriate oversight is in place and that the school remains committed to high-quality care and improvement.

Name: Winnie Williams, Residential Governor

Date: 20/01/2026

