

Linden Bridge School

Linden Bridge School, Grafton Road, Worcester Park, Surrey KT4 7JW

Residential provision inspected under the social care common inspection framework

Information about this residential special school

This residential special school caters for students with autism and associated complex communication needs. It is part of a multi-academy trust. The residential accommodation is provided on the first floor of the main school building. It has capacity for 32 students.

At the time of this inspection, there were 145 students on roll, 13 of whom were using the residential provision for up to 2 nights during the school week in 2 flats. The inspector met 5 boarders during the inspection.

The inspector only inspected the social care provision at the school.

The residential manager has been in post since March 2019 and has a relevant qualification.

Inspection dates: 16 and 17 March 2026

Overall experiences and progress of children and young people, taking into account **outstanding**

How well children and young people are helped and protected **outstanding**

The effectiveness of leaders and managers **outstanding**

The residential special school provides highly effective services that consistently exceed the standards of good. The actions of the school contribute to significantly improved outcomes and positive experiences for children and young people.

Date of previous inspection: 18 March 2025

Overall judgement at last inspection: good

Inspection judgements

Overall experiences and progress of student and young people: outstanding

Students thrive in the school's residential provision. They receive excellent, individualised care from a committed team of staff who feel privileged to help students succeed. Students feel safe and relaxed in their flats. Fun and laughter are shared, and friendships are made.

Parents describe their children's experiences as 'enjoyable' and explain how children have developed skills that have transferred into their homes. Parents feel lucky that their children stay in the residential provision at the school, and they comment on the trusting relationships their children have made. One parent said, 'Communication from staff is excellent. My child appears excited and happy to go to boarding; they have developed really close relationships with staff, and their independence has significantly developed.'

Students enjoy staying in the residential provision because they can socialise and make friends. They develop a strong sense of belonging and community. Residential staff develop positive relationships with students based on mutual respect and trust. Their interactions are warm and playful. Students know their voices are important, and they share their views with staff, the independent visitor, advocates and trustees.

The residential provision is a homely and comfortable environment. Students have their own bedrooms, which they can personalise. Communal spaces invite play and learning. For example, students can choose to read books, play board games, or use technology with their friends. Students are encouraged to develop independence skills by cooking and exhibiting good self-care. They have tasty and nutritious meals in the cafeteria and are also able to plan, shop, and prepare and cook meals if they wish.

Students flourish because of the warm and nurturing care and highly effective support they receive from the consistent, dedicated team of staff. Individualised approaches to supporting learning ensure that students make social, emotional and educational progress. The staff dedicate themselves to the students in their care. This gives students a powerful message about how much they are valued. Staff know the students exceptionally well. The strong foundation established by this approach enables students make excellent progress.

Staff help students increase their self-esteem by facilitating a vast number of different experiences that give them the confidence to try new things. As a result, students participate in a wide variety of activities they enjoy, providing them with positive lasting memories. Students particularly enjoy their annual holiday, using the skills they have learned in a different environment. While these experiences are for

enrichment purposes, they also allow students to develop sensory tolerance, resilience and a sense of achievement.

How well student and young people are helped and protected: outstanding

The designated safeguarding lead (DSL) and senior leadership team demonstrate exemplary safeguarding practice. The practice and the willingness of the DSL and the team to collaborate with other professionals ensure strong oversight.

Students receive consistently high-quality care in a safe and secure environment. The residential provision is remarkably settled due to a proactive and nurturing team of staff, whose presence reassures students. Staff recognise all behaviour as a form of communication and, because of this and their professional curiosity, have a broader understanding of each student's needs and what they are trying to express. Behaviour support plans are child centred and individualised. They help staff understand students' needs and ensure that they are comprehensively met.

There have been no physical interventions or incidents of children going missing since the last inspection. Staff respond positively to challenging behaviours because they understand the effects of neurodiversity and trauma. The effectiveness of their responses is further enhanced because incidents are not considered in isolation. This enables staff to have an excellent understanding of the risks associated with each student.

Students are supported in learning about a wide range of topics linked to promoting their safety and understanding of the world. For example, they learn about road safety, stranger danger, online safety and trusted adults. These skills are tested in the school, at home and in the community.

Students are supported in learning strategies that successfully help them regulate their emotions. This allows them to discuss their feelings and how their bodies respond to stress. Students develop increased self-awareness and the ability to reflect.

Leaders and managers have established an open safeguarding culture. When appropriate, safeguarding leads liaise with the local authority designated officer to share information and seek guidance. Meticulous, well-organised and robust records evidence excellent health and safety processes and recruitment practices.

The effectiveness of leaders and managers: outstanding

The residential provision is led by a highly motivated, strong and effective leadership team. The team creates an aspirational culture that is based on a shared commitment and dedication for students to have the best experiences and opportunities. The leadership team's desire to make a difference to the students' lives is echoed throughout the staff team. This dynamic team maintains a highly aspirational culture that drives forward the exceptional progress that students make.

The senior leadership team is characterised by a diverse range of backgrounds and expertise, which combine to form a strong team that is committed to maximising the life opportunities of residential students.

Staff express strong loyalty to the school. They show a fierce commitment to ensuring that the residential students do as well as they possibly can, and they talk about them with humour and affection. Daily handovers ensure seamless transitions from the residential provision to school. This allows students to experience consistency throughout their day and into the evening. This helps students make excellent progress socially and academically.

Excellent monitoring systems help leaders track patterns and trends in students' behaviour. All incidents are reviewed to ensure that learning is identified wherever possible. Leaders empower students to have a voice, and they consult professionals and family members.

Through specialised, individualised training, staff have an in-depth understanding of all students, using their knowledge to ensure that each student's care is unique and that it evolves as their needs change.

Trustees are well placed to oversee the work of the residential provision, having extensive knowledge of the work being done through their observations. Informative reports from an independent visitor and an advocate for students further enhance their understanding and help ensure that students receive exceptional care.

Leaders and managers provide an excellent supportive environment for staff through well-structured supervision and training programmes. Staff in the residential provision report very high levels of job satisfaction, and, as a result, staff retention is excellent. The continuity of care this affords promotes an exceptional level of trust between staff and students.

Information about this inspection

Inspectors have looked closely at the experiences and progress of student and young people using the social care common inspection framework. This inspection was carried out under the Student Act 1989 to assess the effectiveness of the service, how it meets the core functions of the service as set out in legislation, and to consider how well it complies with the national minimum standards.

Residential special school details

Social care unique reference number: SC013884

Headteacher/teacher in charge: Claire Gungah

Type of school: Residential special school

Telephone number: 020 8330 3009

Email address: info@lindenbridge.thpt.org.uk

Inspector

Hannah Cox, Social Care Compliance Inspector

The Office for Standards in Education, Student's Services and Skills (Ofsted) regulates and inspects to achieve excellence in the care of student and young people, and in education and skills for learners of all ages. It regulates and inspects childcare and student's social care, and inspects the Student and Family Court Advisory and Support Service (Cafcass), schools, colleges, initial teacher training, further education and skills, adult and community learning, and education and training in prisons and other secure establishments. It assesses council student's services, and inspects services for looked after student, safeguarding and child protection.

If you would like a copy of this document in a different format, such as large print or Braille, please telephone 0300 123 1231, or email enquiries@ofsted.gov.uk.

You may reuse this information (not including logos) free of charge in any format or medium, under the terms of the Open Government Licence. To view this licence, visit www.nationalarchives.gov.uk/doc/open-government-licence, write to the Information Policy Team, The National Archives, Kew, London TW9 4DU, or email: psi@nationalarchives.gsi.gov.uk.

This publication is available at <http://reports.ofsted.gov.uk/>.

Interested in our work? You can subscribe to our monthly newsletter for more information and updates: <http://eepurl.com/iTrDn>.

Piccadilly Gate
Store Street
Manchester
M1 2WD

T: 0300 123 1231
Textphone: 0161 618 8524
E: enquiries@ofsted.gov.uk
W: www.gov.uk/ofsted

© Crown copyright 2026