

SIAMS Framework September 2023

The 2023 SIAMS Framework expresses the inspection outcome as a qualitative judgement rather than as a quantitative grade.

SIAMS 2023...

- has coherence between the nature of the process, the type of evidence that is gathered, and the inspection judgements
- does not/should not drive school vision
- requires schools to have a theologically rooted Christian vision
- is sensitive to and significantly shaped by the school's context
- frees schools and inspectors from exhaustive one size fits all criteria
- holds trust leaders to account for their work with Church schools

SIAMS 2023...

- has 6 inspection questions for all schools
- has a 7th for VA schools – teaching and learning in RE
- focuses on impact - asking high level questions, scrutinising written evidence, and observing typical school practice
- does not expect any specific strategies, materials, resources etc to be used, as long as impact is evident
- allows an evidence base to be collated collaboratively, before the inspector uses it to reach their judgements

SIAMS 2023...

makes judgements instead of awarding grades.

SIAMS 2023 - radically different, radically the same

Radically different

- judgements not grades
- therefore, no grade descriptors
- emphasis on school context
- emphasis on outcomes not methods
- therefore, no lists of criteria

Radically the same

- Christian vision
- collective worship
- RE
- SMSC
- evidence-based

Content

Inspectors will...

- expect schools to have a **theologically** rooted Christian vision
- scrutinise **school and trust governance**
- lead inspection conversations with **school and trust leaders**
- ask high level questions, scrutinise written evidence, and observe typical school practice to explore **impact rather than process/methods**
- expect a meaningful relationship with the **DBE/MAST**

Inspection Structure

Context of the school 1: Who are we? This factual information enables the inspector to understand the specific context of the school. No judgements are made on this information.

Context of the school 2: What are we doing here? This information enables the inspector to understand the theological underpinning of the school's Christian vision, the school/trust's governance structures, its arrangements for RE and collective worship, and its partnerships. This information informs the inspection judgements that the inspector makes.

Inspection Questions (IQ): How then shall we live and learn together? This information is central to the evidence-based judgements that the inspector makes. The subquestions ensure that the inspector and school leaders have enough evidence to answer the main IQs.

Context of the school 1: Who are we?

- a) Is the school a Church of England, Methodist or joint denomination school?
- b) Is the school (formerly) voluntary controlled or (formerly) voluntary aided, or does it have another designation?
- c) If a former voluntary controlled school does it, as an academy, provide denominational religious education?
- d) What phase is the school – first/infant, junior, primary, middle, secondary, high, all-through? What is the number of pupils on roll?
- e) Is the school an academy or a maintained school? Is the school part of a federation?

Context of the school 1: Who are we?

- f) How is school (and trust) leadership structured and organised? If part of a trust, what authority is delegated locally?
- g) What characterises the school's pupil profile, and the community within which it is situated and/or that it serves? For example, how ethnically, culturally, and socially diverse is the community? And what are the educational needs of pupils?
- h) What church and DBE/MAST partnerships does the school have?
- i) Does the school have any other links or partnerships?

Context of the school 2: What are we doing here?

- a) Considering the answers under 'Who are we?', what is the vision of the school and of the trust?
- b) How is the school's vision a clearly-articulated, theologically rooted Christian vision? How does the trust's vision resonate with this?
- c) How do the specific needs of the school community inform the theologically rooted Christian vision? In other words, do leaders understand the school's context, and do they know how to respond to it theologically?
- d) Why have school leaders decided that the school should be a maintained school/an academy? How does this status enhance the effectiveness of the school as a Church school?
- e) As a result of the school's Christian vision, original foundation, and current context, why are school and trust structures of governance as they are?
- f) How do governance accountability and delegated authority in the school and trust enhance the work of the school as a Church school? How do leaders know this?

Context of the school 2: What are we doing here?

- g) What are the school's arrangements for collective worship? Why are these arrangements in place?
- h) How is religious education structured and organised? Why have these decisions been made?
- i) What is the relationship between the school/trust and the DBE and/or MAST? How do these relationships enhance the school's ability to live out its Christian vision and to live up to its foundation as a Church school, enabling people to flourish?
- j) What is the relationship between the school/trust and local church/es? How do these relationships enhance the school's ability to live out its Christian vision and to live up to its foundation as a Church school, enabling people to flourish?

Inspection Questions (IQ)

(This information is central to the evidence-based judgements that the inspector makes. The subquestions ensure that the inspector and school leaders have enough evidence to answer the main IQs.)

IQ1 How does the school's theologically rooted Christian vision enable pupils and adults to flourish?

- a) How is the Christian vision expressed? For example, is it through values that are faithful to the Anglican/Methodist foundation of the school?
- b) What other strategies do leaders employ to ensure that the theologically rooted Christian vision is a living reality that enables pupils and adults to flourish?
- c) How do leaders know that the theologically rooted Christian vision is enabling people to flourish?
- d) How does the vision of the trust resonate with the school's theologically rooted Christian vision in a way that enhances the work of the school and its Christian foundation?

IQ2 How does the curriculum reflect the theologically rooted Christian vision?

- a) In what ways does the theologically rooted Christian vision shape the curriculum, including the extra-curricular offer?
- b) How is spiritual development an intrinsic part of the curriculum?
- c) How do leaders know that the curriculum is having the intended effect for pupils?
- d) How, specifically, does the Christian vision shape the learning experience for pupils who are deemed to be vulnerable and/or disadvantaged?
- e) How does being part of the trust enhance the school's curriculum?

IQ3 How is collective worship enabling pupils and adults to flourish spiritually?

- a) How do the theologically rooted Christian vision and the Anglican/Methodist foundation of the school shape worship and spirituality in the school?
- b) How do partnerships with the DBE and/or MAST, and partnerships with parish/local church/es enhance this?
- c) In what ways is the worship life of the school inclusive, invitational, and inspirational?
- d) In the context of the school as a Church school, what do pupils and adults understand to be the meaning of spirituality and spiritual development? How does this enhance and enrich collective worship and individuals' spiritual development?
- e) How does the trust contribute to and enhance the school's worship and spiritual life?



IQ4 How does the theologically rooted Christian vision create a culture in which pupils and adults are treated well?

- a) How does the theologically rooted Christian vision enable all to live well together in an inclusive, dignifying, and equitable culture?
- b) How do school policies and practice create a culture in which people's wellbeing is enhanced?
- c) How is enabling good mental health for all central to the school's work?
- d) As a result of the theologically rooted Christian vision, what effective strategies are in place that help pupils and adults, including those deemed to be vulnerable and/or disadvantaged, at difficult times?
- e) How does the trust contribute to and enhance the inclusion and wellbeing of pupils and adults, ensuring that all are treated well?



IQ5 How does the theologically rooted Christian vision create an active culture of justice and responsibility?

- a) How does the theologically rooted Christian vision enable positive relationships that balance individual freedom and rights, with responsibility towards others?
- b) How does this culture encourage justice and courageous advocacy, enabling pupils to make ethical choices and to be agents of change?
- c) As an outworking of the theologically rooted Christian vision, what partnerships are important to the school? How do they impact positively and reciprocally on people's lives?
- d) How does the trust make a positive impact on the culture of the school?

IQ6 Is the religious education curriculum effective?

(with reference to the expectations set out in the [Church of England Statement of Entitlement for Religious Education](#))

- a) How do school leaders ensure that the provision, profile, and priority of religious education in all key stages reflects its place on the curriculum of a Church school?
- b) How do school and trust leaders ensure that the religious education curriculum is challenging, accurate, well-sequenced, well-balanced, relevant, and diverse?
- c) How do school and trust leaders ensure that religious education is well-resourced, and that continuing professional development for staff has an impact on the effectiveness of the curriculum?

IQ7 What is the quality of religious education in (former) voluntary aided schools, or in former voluntary controlled schools in which denominational religious education is taught?

a) What is the quality of teaching?

b) How well do pupils make progress in their learning as a result of a balanced and well-structured religious education curriculum?

c) How does assessment inform teaching and learning?

Judgements

- School leaders and inspectors will work together to create a robust and comprehensive evidence base.
- Inspectors will then evaluate this evidence to make judgements, holding school and trust leaders to account.
- Judgements will put schools into one of two categories.

Judgement J1

Through its vision and practice, the school is living up to its foundation as a Church school and is enabling pupils and adults to flourish.

Judgement J2

The school's vision and practice are not enabling it to fully live up to its foundation as a Church school. This is for the following reason/s.

Judgement J2

- a) School and trust leaders have not ensured that there is a theologically rooted Christian vision for the school that is enabling pupils and adults to flourish.
- b) School and trust leaders have not ensured that the curriculum reflects the school's Christian vision.
- c) School and trust leaders have not ensured that collective worship is enabling pupils and adults to flourish spiritually.
- d) School and trust leaders have not ensured that pupils and adults are treated well.

Judgement J2

- e) School and trust leaders have not ensured that the school's Christian vision creates an active culture of justice and responsibility.
- f) School and trust leaders have not ensured that the provision, profile, and priority of religious education result in an effective curriculum.
- g) In a (former) voluntary aided school, or in a former voluntary controlled school in which denominational religious education is taught, school and trust leaders have not ensured that the quality of teaching is good, and that pupils make at least expected progress.

Judgements

- J2 will highlight the areas on which the school needs to focus as well as indicating the school's strengths.
- For example, the school may not have ensured that the provision, profile, and priority of RE result in an effective curriculum. However, they may have a theologically rooted Christian vision that is transforming lives.
- Any permutation is possible under J2.

What will it mean for me?

- Schools
- Multi academy trusts

Schools

- SIAMS 2023 *is not* reimagining what it means to be a Church school.
- It *is* reimagining what it means to inspect and how to make the best use of evidence.
- There will be a firm expectation of a theologically rooted Christian vision.
- There will be an enhanced freedom to be a Christian-vision-driven Church school in the specific context of the school.
- Freedom also from an exhaustive one-size fits all set of criteria.

Schools

Consequences of an inspector not having enough evidence to answer all IQs positively:

- diocesan intervention/support
- reinspection earlier/after 3 years

The purpose of SIAMS is to help a school to be the very best Church school it can be.



Trusts

Under current legislation, SIAMS remains an inspection of an individual school

However, the 2023 Framework involves trust leaders and evaluates ...

- how the trust vision resonates with the school's theologically rooted Christian vision and whether it is effective
- whether school/trust governance are appropriate and effective
- how church and DBE/MAST partnerships are evident, meaningful, relevant
- how being part of the trust enhances the school as a Church school

Theologically-rooted Christian vision

- Analysis of SIAMS reports from 2021 – 2022 reveals widespread misapprehension of what is meant by a theologically rooted Christian vision.
- Common mistakes include thinking that:
 - simply adding a Bible verse turns a vision into a Christian vision – **it does not!**
 - biblical = theological – **it does not!** Theology is the study of the nature of God and consists of Scripture and the teachings and traditions of the Church.
 - taking a Bible verse out of context does not matter – **it does!**
 - there does not need to be connection between the Christian vision and the work of the school – **there does!**

Theologically rooted Christian vision

- Inspectors will discuss the provenance of each school's Christian vision. Where does it come from? Why this particular vision?
- They must be able to report on the vision as a *theologically rooted Christian vision*.
- It is recommended that school leaders access diocesan training on Christian vision to improve their understanding.
- Church leaders are likely to be able to help too.

Theologically rooted Christian vision

- Inspectors will not expect everyone in the school community to ‘recite’ the vision.

BUT they will expect

- evidence (discursive evidence is fine) of how school leaders created the vision and that it has theological roots that they understand
- to see evidence of the vision in action, enabling pupils and adults to flourish.

Theologically rooted Christian vision

When exploring Christian vision, inspectors will not be convinced by the following.

- A list of Christian values
- A vision that simply has a Bible verse added to the end (tagged on?) with no deeper theological thought/basis
- A generic vision that has a phrase like ‘rooted in our Christian values’ or ‘in the love of God’ added to the end (tagged on?) with no evidence of real theological roots and understanding

When will the changes take place?

Timescales

- Diocesan training for schools Nov '22 – July '23
- Implementation September 2023

Aspiration and knowledge

The 2023 Framework establishes the following as a baseline.

- Schools have a clearly articulated, theologically rooted Christian vision that reflects their foundation and that is enabling pupils and adults to flourish.
- This Christian vision is reflected in the school's curriculum and extra-curricular offer.
- Schools have a rich worship and spiritual life that, together, enable spiritual flourishing.
- As a result of the Christian vision, pupils and adults are treated well.
- School culture is characterised by justice and responsibility.
- The provision, profile, and priority of RE result in an effective curriculum.
- RE is taught well and pupils make at least expected progress.
- If in a multi academy trust, the trust's vision and practice will make a tangible and positive impact on the school as a Church school.