

The Church of England has made two new senior appointments within its National Education Team to lead the new framework for Statutory Inspection of Anglican and Methodist Schools (SIAMS) which comes into effect from September 2021.



Dr Margaret James will be National Director of SIAMS, and David Tait has been appointed as Deputy Head.

All Church of England and Methodist schools receive SIAMS inspections which focus on the impact of the Church school's Christian vision on pupils and adults. The provision for this is made under Section 48 of the Education Act 2005, and the inspections are carried out in addition to the Ofsted inspections which all schools receive.

The changes to how SIAMS operates will mean that the national church, in collaboration with all Diocesan Boards of Education and the Methodist Church, can assure the quality and consistency of SIAMS across the whole country and operate more efficiently to deliver the inspection, administrative and training elements of the process. Dioceses will continue to advise schools on developing Christian character and ethos.

Margaret James has been the Director of Education for the Diocese of Worcester since 2016, having previously worked as a primary school teacher, local authority adviser and Church school leader, before becoming SIAMS Manager for the Dioceses of Gloucester and Worcester. Her career in Church school and inspection leadership spans almost 30 years, during which time she has also contributed to regional and national SIAMS training and quality assurance. In 2018, she was awarded a Doctorate in Education having conducted the only doctoral level research into SIAMS inspection.

Margaret said, "I am delighted to have been asked to lead the Church of England's new nationally integrated school inspection system. SIAMS has a crucial role to play in the life of all Church schools and it is an honour to be able to take its work forward at this seminal moment in time."

David Tait has been the Headteacher of Shincliffe CE Primary School, Durham since 2013. He serves as a SIAMS inspector and has worked to support a number of schools within Durham Local Authority. His career teaching in Church schools spans almost 20 years.

David said, "I am honoured to have been asked to serve as deputy national lead for SIAMS. This is an exciting time for Church of England and Methodist schools. I look forward to playing my part in the new integrated system of inspection which will make a significant contribution to ensuring flourishing for all children and adults connected with Church schools."

The Church of England's Chief Education Officer, Revd Canon Nigel Genders, said "I'm delighted to welcome Margaret and David and the wealth of experience and energy they will bring to these important roles.

"During a difficult year for schools, we have been working with dioceses to develop a more integrated national system for managing inspections to ensure greater consistency in experience and processes.

"I am delighted that, following agreement by every Diocesan Board of Education, we are now well advanced with setting up the new national systems that this will need, and of which these roles are a key part."

Margaret will start work on 1 June, with David commencing his role on 1 September.

A summary of responsibilities under the new SIAMS framework

At its simplest under the new SIAMS model from September 2021, dioceses will be responsible for:

- Advice on developing Christian character and ethos
- Training for schools
- School reviews and support for schools

The national team will be responsible for:

- Scheduling, including allocation of inspectors to school and notification of school (and diocese) when an inspection is to take place, the collation of reports and the payment of inspectors.
- Initial training of inspectors and the ongoing inspector training.
- A national 'Duty desk' to provide support for inspectors during inspections.
- A new system of quality assurance of inspections with targeted shadowing and feedback, and the quality assurance of reports which will be done with a centralised critical reading service.
- A revised Appeals and Complaints process which will be managed centrally.
- The publication of a SIAMS Annual Report - including thematic and quantitative trends.

More information

- [Church of England Schools](#)
- [SIAMS school inspections](#)