

SIAMS 2023 Framework Training for registered inspectors

Day 1

Dr Margaret James and David Tait

National Director and Deputy Director of SIAMS



THE CHURCH
OF ENGLAND
EDUCATION OFFICE

Training Overview

- Session A: Overview of changes, evidence and judgements
- Session B: Theologically Rooted Christian vision and school context

Session A: Overview, Evidence, Judgements

Headlines

- Grades are replaced by judgements.
- Each school needs to have a theologically rooted Christian vision.
- High level inspection questions with a focus on impact replace exhaustive lists of criteria.
- Each school's specific context plays a greater role than at present.
- Trust accountability is brought to the fore.

Overview Session A

1. Rationale underpinning the 2023 SIAMS Framework
2. Inspector skills and attitudes
3. What is enough evidence?
4. What do the judgements mean?

Rationale underpinning the 2023 Framework

Some key words

- Coherence
- Clarity
- Context
- Christian vision
- Integrity
- Insight
- Impact
- Improvement

Rationale: Coherence

- The type of evidence gathered should be reflected in the type of inspection outcomes that are reached.
- This is one of the main reasons for the move away from grades to judgements.
- Qualitative evidence should lead to qualitative outcomes.
- This can be expressed in binary judgements – similar to society's understanding of right/wrong, innocent/guilty.
- The purpose of inspection is also a key factor in shaping coherence.

Rationale: Clarity

- What are we actually asking and what are we actually trying to find out?
- Simple, straightforward language
- Why, How, What sections
- Specificity and simplicity in the Inspection Questions (IQ)
- Similarly in the reasons underlying Judgement 2 (J2)
- SIAMS 2023 recognises the expertise of both the school leaders and the inspector and brings clarity to the parts played by both.
- It's important to take this clarity through into the inspection process itself.

Rationale: Context

- We say that context matters, but does it really?
- Input/output equation of education – to be avoided
- Not a dilution of expectations, but a realistic, fair, and formative process of making judgements
- Recognises the reality in which each school operates
- *Inspectors' ability to read and apply the school's context in relation to the Inspection Questions will be crucial to reliable and fair outcomes – and to the success of the new Framework*
- Probe & don't be duped, whilst remaining open & flexible – how new are things?

Rationale: Christian vision

- Properly Christian vision!
- Theologically rooted Christian vision – more on this later - but we are not imposing any particular theology on schools.
- SIAMS will no longer attempt to evaluate the effectiveness of a vision that doesn't actually exist.
- It will highlight – expect to see - the difference between vision and any system of values. Values and vision are not the same thing.
- Dioceses are offering a lot of training on this, and inspectors need to be well-informed.

Rationale: Integrity

- Two meanings of the word
- We have to be able to fully believe in – stand by, defend - what we do and what we expect schools to do.
- SIAMS must be morally sound throughout.
- It must cohere and not be internally inconsistent. At the very least, it must all make sense and be logical.
- SIAMS inspection must be respectful from all angles and to all participants.
- Outcomes must be fair and emerge from a robust and accurate evidence base.

Rationale: Insight

- It is up to us to get under the skin of a school quickly, consistently, and accurately.
- Reliable and robust judgements rely on us doing so.
- Our evidence base enables us to have insight.
- Our questions enable us to have an evidence base.
- Our timetable enables us to ask the right questions of the right people.
- Collaborative evidence gathering leads to inspector judgement.
- *Be sure that you have not had the wool pulled over your eyes.*
- Probe, challenge, push back if necessary, triangulate – always inspecting in a Christian manner.

Rationale: Impact

- What are we really focusing on?
- Means or ends?
- Process or impact?
- It must be impact.
- This focus enables inspection to be both high level (IQs) and accessible (detailed context-specific evidence).
- Reliant on robust, compelling evidence.
- Check regularly for preconceived ideas & keep this at the forefront of your mind.
- Our focus must be on whether what the school is doing because of their Christian vision is working – and how do they/we know?

Rationale: Improvement

- SIAMS/we must leave the school in a better place than it was before the inspection.
- What is the role of a punitive approach in this? We must always be checking that we are inspecting in a Christian manner?
- SIAMS as a formative process of inspection – playing its part in the school's journey of improvement.
- Shared goal of each school being the very best Church school that they can be
- The collective – a body in which all parts need to be working effectively and together.

Inspector skills and attitudes

Some key words and phrases

- Approachable
- Beneath the surface
- Collaborative
- Discursive
- Expert
- Firm yet flexible

Skills & Attitudes: Approachable

- Self-awareness and awareness of others
- Not there as a friend
- Not there to be pompous
- Not better or more important than those in the school
- Successful inspection relies on inspectors gathering the right evidence from the right people.
- They should feel that they can approach us and be open/honest, without our approachability compromising the process.
- Important – fundamental - balance to get right

Skills & Attitudes: Beneath the surface

- **Insight** – central skill – takes time and effort and intentionality
- **Relational** - good relationships, quickly established
- **Trust** – key to gathering relevant evidence & drawing accurate conclusions
- **Honesty** – part of integrity – show it & enable it
- **Openness** – people can't be open with you if they don't trust you
- **Fabrications** – conceal as much as they reveal

What is really going on in this school?

Skills & Attitudes: Collaborative

- Distinction between the process of gathering evidence and the process of making judgements
- Evidence gathering is collaborative.
- Making judgements is the domain of the inspector alone.
- Skill in balancing both without compromising either.
- A collaborative coming together of professionals, each with their own part to play in the improvement of the school.
- ‘With’ not ‘to’.
- Communication is crucial to a collaborative process.

Skills & Attitudes: Discursive

- Inspection *conversations* in which listening/reading between the lines is crucial
- What is really going on? What is being said and what is being *not* said? Does it all make sense and hang together or is something amiss?
- Not a firing range of questions
- Invitational and authoritative – being discursive does not mean relinquishing control
- Conversations can be both focused and meandering
- They must involve diverse groups – both in make-up and range

Skills & Attitudes: Expert

- You are the expert in inspecting and in *making judgements*
- The leaders are the experts in the life of the school
- Retain (& deserve) your status as expert without compromise yet without being arrogant or pompous
- All of the elements of your expertise need to come together to do this successfully
- *The success of the 2023 Framework relies on inspector skill, expertise and competence.*

Skills & Attitudes: Firm yet flexible

- Counterbalance of insistence (Christian vision) and openness (context)
- Freedom within fixed parameters can lead to flourishing
- No room for preconceived ideas or expectations
- But don't let the wool be pulled over your eyes
- Leave the school knowing that they have been listened to, understood, and treated fairly
- Leave the school knowing that they will be represented accurately and that they are in a better place to move forward

What is enough evidence?

What is the evidence for?

It is to enable you to...

- answer each of the IQs
- make accurate and fair judgements
- defend your judgements if challenged
- hold school leaders to account
- state whether, through its vision, the school is living up to its foundation as a Church school and is enabling pupils and adults to flourish
- *identify whether there is anything that requires urgent attention as a matter of priority*
- different from 'normal' areas for development

How will you know if/when you have enough?

- Does your evidence enable you to answer each of the 6/7 IQs?
- Has the school given you everything that could be relevant?
- Is there an urgent need related to any of the IQs? Eg no Christian vision, no real worship life, poor quality RE
- This is different from improvements that are needed eg embedding a vision, gaining understanding of courageous advocacy
- The IQs are high level- specific yet broad in scope
- Inspection can only ever be a snapshot – it is never the full truth nor the final word.
- The outcome/judgement is not an equation.

How will you know if/when you have enough?

Process

1. Use your expertise to bring together relevant context-specific evidence
2. Apply your professional judgement
3. Draw a conclusion – make a judgement

What do the judgements mean?

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 J1

- Does this mean perfection? No.
- Does it mean the school has nothing to improve? No.
- Is it time for complacency? No.
- Is the work done? No.
- Will the school be doing the same things as the last school you inspected? Not necessarily.
- Would you do everything that you see the school doing? Not necessarily.

Judgement J1

- Does it mean that the vision is theologically rooted? Yes.
- Does it mean that the vision is genuinely making a difference to people's lives? Yes.
- Does this include all the different types/groups of people in the school? Yes.
- Does it mean that there is equal evidence for each IQ? Not necessarily & likely not.
- Does it mean that nobody will have a complaint against the school? No.
- Does it mean that you can generally be confident that the school is working effectively as a Church school? Yes.

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

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

Judgement J2

- School and trust leaders have not ensured that the school's Christian vision creates an active culture of justice and responsibility.
- School and trust leaders have not ensured that the provision, profile, and priority of religious education result in an effective curriculum.
- 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 a matter of urgency/priority 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 of priority needs is possible under J2.

Summary

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

SIAMS 2023

Radically different, radically the same.

Session B: Christian vision and school context

The Law

What drives me? Why am I called to be a leader? What is my educational philosophy? My theology for education? What is my understanding of faith? What is my view of leadership? Who am I? Why am I involved in Church school leadership?

SIAMS Schedule

Leadership

What do the Bible, and the teachings and traditions of the Church say about education, in the context of the school? The CofE vision for education has done a lot of this thinking already – what parts of it are most relevant for my school? What are we doing here? Do I just add a Bible verse to the vision we already have? Do I have to have a Bible verse?

Who are we as a school/trust? What characterises the school? What about the wider community? What do they most need from the school? How can we best serve them? How can we bring hope and aspiration? How can we enable flourishing and fullness of life?

Theology

Context

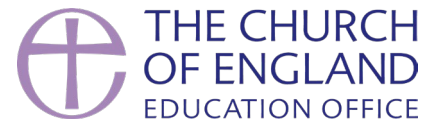
Ofsted Framework

Trust Deed

What the Framework tells us: 1

SIAMS must:

- make judgements and report on religious education
- make judgements and report on collective worship
- make judgements and report on pupils' SMSC education
- make judgements on how, through its theologically rooted Christian vision, the school is living up to its foundation as a Church school, enabling pupils and adults to flourish



What the Framework tells us: 2

Schools and trusts must provide convincing evidence of how:

- the school's work is driven by a contextually-appropriate theologically rooted Christian vision for education that reflects its foundation as a Church school, meets the needs of the school community, and enables people to flourish
- the vision and practice of the trust are coherent with those of the school



What schools have been advised to consider

Transitional Guidance:

- When establishing or developing a Christian vision, school leaders may benefit from asking themselves and their teams a number of questions.
- These will include, for example:
 - What the original Christian foundation of the school says that the school is for.
 - Whether it gives direction, for example, for the school to meet the needs of those who are most in need in the local community.
 - Whether it determines that the school should offer a Christian, or an Anglican, or a Methodist education.



What schools should be thinking about

Transitional guidance continued:

- What are the most pressing needs of the community?

There might be a need for aspiration; or to learn a generous, accepting, and inclusive attitude towards others; or to create a loving and safe family environment. It is likely that schools will want to do all of this and more, but what are the most pressing community needs? Do leaders understand the context of their school, and do they know how to respond to it theologically?

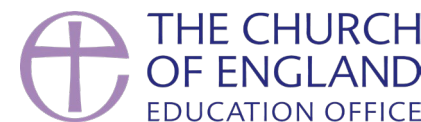


What schools should be thinking about

Transitional guidance continued:

- What does the Bible teach about this/these needs, and about what education in its broadest sense is for? What about the Church of England's vision for education? Do the teachings and traditions of the Church provide any additional wisdom?

An exploration of this, making use of the expertise within the local church or from the diocesan education team/MAST, should help the school to gain an idea of what the focus of its vision could be.



The school's theologically rooted vision 1

St. Mary's Christian Vision

Our Vision is to offer **Life In All Its Fullness** (John 10:10)

This is rooted in Jesus' words: 'I have come that they may have life, and have it to the full.' John 10.10

Our vision is to provide all children and adults with opportunities to shine and sparkle, develop and grow. To meet Jesus' promise of a flourishing life we offer a creative curriculum, high quality enrichment experiences, opportunities for art and sporting excellence and an approach based on our shared Christian values. We enhance wellbeing, nurture opportunity and guide all to live in harmony.



What is your initial thinking?

What questions would you, as inspector, ask?

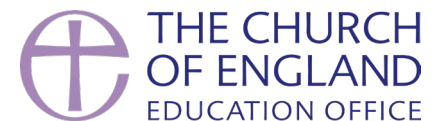
What do you not yet know?



The school's theologically rooted vision 2

At St Joseph's Church of England School, our vision of life without limits life in all its fullness puts children and their families at the centre of everything. Our intention is that every experience enables children and adults to flourish as unique individuals and to thrive as God intended. This flourishing should be mentally, physically, emotionally and spiritually.

We are an inclusive school at the heart of our community. All are welcome. In all things we are guided by the words of Jesus - **'I have come that they may have life, life in all its fullness' John 10:10**. Jesus gave his disciples a vision of a life that is full of possibilities and dreams yet to be met. We desire our school to be a sign of fullness of life for all, as we educate for wisdom, knowledge and skills, hope and aspiration, community and living well together, and dignity and respect. Many will enjoy the fullness and not recognize where it comes from; some will, with our help, trace it to who is responsible for it; but whether our inspiration for doing what we do is understood or not, it is the right thing to do - as followers of the One who came to bring fullness and abundance of life.



What is your initial thinking?

What questions would you, as inspector, ask?

What do you not yet know?



Thinking about context

Consider:

1. Does the school understand its context?
2. Does the school know how to respond theologically?

How does the information you have about context add to your thinking about the theologically rooted vision?



The school's theologically rooted vision 1

St. Mary's Christian Vision

Our Vision is to offer **Life In All Its Fullness** (John 10:10)

This is rooted in Jesus' words: 'I have come that they may have life, and have it to the full.' John 10.10

Our vision is to provide all children and adults with opportunities to shine and sparkle, develop and grow. To meet Jesus' promise of a flourishing life we offer a creative curriculum, high quality enrichment experiences, opportunities for art and sporting excellence and an approach based on our shared Christian values. We enhance wellbeing, nurture opportunity and guide all to live in harmony.



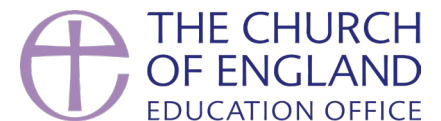
Context

- VC primary
- NOR 95
- Vast majority White British
- SEND and disadvantaged below national averages
- Ofsted RI November 2022

What is your updated thinking?

What questions would you, as inspector, ask?

What do you not yet know?



The school's theologically rooted vision 2

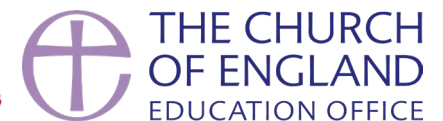
At St Joseph's Church of England School, our vision of life without limits life in all its fullness puts children and their families at the centre of everything. Our intention is that every experience enables children and adults to flourish as unique individuals and to thrive as God intended. This flourishing should be mentally, physically, emotionally and spiritually.

We are an inclusive school at the heart of our community. All are welcome. In all things we are guided by the words of Jesus - **'I have come that they may have life, life in all its fullness'** John 10:10. Jesus gave his disciples a vision of a life that is full of possibilities and dreams yet to be met. We desire our school to be a sign of fullness of life for all, as we educate for wisdom, knowledge and skills, hope and aspiration, community and living well together, and dignity and respect. Many will enjoy the fullness and not recognize where it comes from; some will, with our help, trace it to who is responsible for it; but whether our inspiration for doing what we do is understood or not, it is the right thing to do - as followers of the One who came to bring fullness and abundance of life.



Context

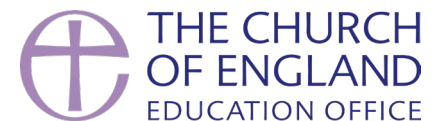
- VA primary
- NOR 420
- High levels of ethnic and religious diversity. Approx 30% of pupils from Sikh background
- SEND and disadvantaged well above national averages
- HT provides leadership support to another local church school



What is your updated thinking?

What questions would you, as inspector, ask?

What do you not yet know?



Working through a theologically rooted Christian vision

Gradually unfolding scenario...

- Website information
- SEF extracts
- EF of conversation with HT and senior leaders re. vision

Working through a theologically rooted Christian vision

Gradually unfolding scenario...

- Website information

Vision 3: 'Let your light shine'

Information from the school website

"Let your light shine" Matthew 5:16

These words of Jesus are the grounding of our school's vision. They inspire our whole school community and motivate us in our actions. In Matthew's gospel Jesus told us that we are lights for the world. As we seek to follow his example, we can share his light with others and change the world!

*"You are the light of the world. A town built on a hill cannot be hidden. Neither do people light a lamp and put it under a bowl. Instead, they put it on its stand, and it gives light to everyone in the house. In the same way, **let your light shine** before others, that they may see your good deeds and glorify your Father in heaven." Matthew 5:16*

We believe that every child and adult can shine and that this shining can be for the benefit of all. We celebrate that all are special in God's eyes and that all have unique talents. We nurture these so that each of us has the opportunity to become the very best person that God intended us to be. We encourage our children to allow the light of their lives to shine and make a difference in their school their homes and community.

We believe that developing a sense of valued-ness is of paramount importance. Jesus said: 'I am the light of the world' (John 8:12). As he spoke to those around him during the Sermon on the Mount, he said: '**You are the light of the world**'. In addition to letting their light shine on others, we want our children to recognise the value of their own light: to be proud of their personal achievements; to value and respect themselves; and to know how loved and cherished they are both by God and by others. Our lights shine both within and without, and because of this our school is the city on the hill which cannot be hidden.



Working through a theologically rooted Christian vision

Gradually unfolding scenario...

- SEF extracts

Working through a theologically rooted Christian vision

Gradually unfolding scenario...

- EF of conversation with HT and senior leaders re. vision

What if...

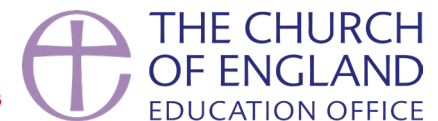
... the theological basis to the vision is not immediately clear?

St Mark's CE Primary School Vision (Vision 4)

‘Working Together, Valuing All, Learning for Life’

Recognising its historic foundation, the school will preserve and develop its religious character in partnership with the Church of England at parish and diocesan level.

The school aims to serve the whole community by providing an education of the highest quality. It roots its working in a Christian Vision promoting Christian Values and respect for differing values and cultural diversity through the experience it offers pupils.



The website offers the following supplementary information

Underpinning our School Vision, "Working Together, Valuing All, Learning for Life" our Christian Values are a golden thread in our activities, our planning and our guidance and policies.

We endeavour to enable these key Values to help us actively live out our Vision. They infuse our purpose, our character development, our ethos and then seamlessly, in turn, the experience of learning and school that all our children have.

We are wide in scope in our Values - 12 in total. Although we're always mindful of all 12, each term we focus on one specifically. This value is especially evident in our worship, but will also be explored, developed and celebrated right across the curriculum.



Information in the SEF 1

Our Vision is rooted in the Christian story and is faithful to our historic foundation as a Church school. We have intentionally not expressed the Vision in overtly theological language as this presents a barrier to many of our community and renders aspects of our school inaccessible. It would, therefore, be in tension with our intended purpose of enabling the flourishing of all God's children and being a place of welcome for all. That said, the theological basis of our Vision is clear.

‘Working Together, Valuing All, Learning for Life’



Information in the SEF 2

Working Together. The gospels are full of accounts of Jesus' intimate encounter with those of each and every background. The wise and the powerful, the humble and the lowly. Each and every one is called, by invitation and without compulsion, into a relationship with Jesus who has come to give life. In our community we draw on the account of the 'Feeding of the 5000' to demonstrate our belief that by working together, the unique, inimitable worth of every individual is brought, through the work of the school, to fruition. It is this flourishing of each through working together in community as God intends that motivates and inspires us.



Information in the SEF 3

Valuing All. The gospels, teaching of the Church and the Christian story demonstrate that God values all unequivocally. In our community we draw on the account of the ‘Lost Sheep’ to demonstrate our belief in infectious, generous, ceaseless and overflowing love. By valuing all, as God intends we should, we demonstrate that true community is found where there are no outsiders and all are known and loved. We ‘go the extra’ mile in order to be attentive to the needs of all in our community. Our differences are our strengths.



Information in the SEF 4

Learning for Life. Jesus was a great storyteller and teacher. In our community we draw on the account of the ‘Boy Jesus in the Temple’ to demonstrate our belief in the value of life-long learning and the model of Jesus as teacher. Through a rich and engaging curriculum that reflects our Christian vision and is rooted in our local context we ensure that we are a learning community committed to the academic flourishing of our pupils. We lay the foundations of life long learning, that asks the ‘big questions,’ seeks answers and ignites curiosity.



Strapline

Ask any member of our school community, and they are likely to refer to our 'strapline'. It's a brief summary of who we are and why we do what we do. It encapsulates our Christian Vision.

Working Together: *Feed*

Valuing All: *Find*

Learning for Life: *Flourish*

Summing up

- Updated thinking
- Context
- Personal perspectives

Final thoughts

Does the school understand its context?

Do I understand the school's context?

Does the school know how to respond theologically to its context?

Is the vision enabling the school to live up to its foundation?

What does this mean for me as an inspector and for my inspection practice?

