

SIAMS 2023 Framework Training for registered inspectors

Day 4

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THE CHURCH
OF ENGLAND
EDUCATION OFFICE

Day 4 Overview

1. New templates and aides-memoires
2. Gathering evidence – inspection conversations
3. Theologically rooted Christian vision
4. Quality assurance
5. Conduct of the inspection
6. General reminders

There will be a 10 minute comfort break halfway through the session



1. New templates

New templates

- Most of the templates have been updated for use under the 2023 Framework
- Delete any saved versions of the previous ones to avoid errors in usage
- Use templates from the Inspector Hub per inspection – new ones added
- Do not deviate from the templates and make sure that you sequentially follow all steps eg for updates and feedback – stick to the structure
- Not doing so opens an inspector up to a complaint for failure to follow protocol
- *Please note: the contract will no longer be used.*

Overview of the 2023 templates

Templates ensure consistency in practice and provide a written record of how judgements emerged.

- T1 Initial call to the school
- T2 Inspection Contract – gone! Amended wording in notification email – gives heads/CEOs the chance to indicate an inspector's conflict of interest
- New T2 – letter to staff
- T3 Timetable
- T4 Pre-inspection plan (PIP)
- T5 PIP call
- T6 Evidence form (EF)
- T7 Mid-point Update
- T8 Final briefing & Areas for Development
- T9 Final feedback

T1 Initial call to the school

Changes

- Discuss the theologically rooted Christian vision & ask the headteacher to provide a written summary of the school's theologically rooted Christian vision – up to/no longer than 100 words. (There is a lot of interest in this within dioceses/schools – only issue is space on the report!)
- For the academic year 2023-24, inspectors will accept a SEF that is written against the 2018 Schedule.
- *Summary SEF should not be insisted upon.* This is a new emphasis in inspector training. Be sensitive to a school's circumstances.

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T1 Initial call to the school

Reminders

- Self-evaluation is *not statutory* – note new guidance to schools
- Explain if a colleague will be present in a specific role (QA, Sign-off assessor, shadow).
- The central team will have also done so as part of the notification call.
- Section that directs to request the following to be available for discussion during the inspection... - *no further items to be added*
- Use the call to understand the vision, context, significant events (eg bereavement). You may also wish to ask the head if they want to share any striking evidence from any of the IQs.
- DO NOT make the head feel as if they are being tested, interrogated, or inspected – this could easily become an additional and unnecessary pressure.
- Check whether key staff have any after-school commitments – especially possible on a Friday

T2. Letter to staff

Changes

- New template

Reminders

- Personalise it
- Save it with a correct title

T3. Timetable

Changes

- No changes

Reminders

- The headteacher is asked to draft a timetable but the inspector retains control of it - they may need additional/fewer meetings &/or for timings to be amended etc. following receipt of the draft.
- Timings on the template are suggested and will be finalised by the inspector depending on the inspection lines of enquiry.
- Each meeting will have specific foci, depending on the lines of enquiry and the need to triangulate evidence.
- Combine meetings if this is helpful for your evidence gathering.

T4. Pre-inspection plan (PIP)

Changes

- LOE link to IQs

Reminders

- Aspects of school context should be considered as part of evidence gathering activities. This has had a high profile in diocesan and school training.
- Reference to contextual factors should only be made in PIP & report writing if they are necessary for understanding and interpreting the inspection findings.
- LOEs must not be the whole IQ – be specific.

T5. PIP call

Changes

- No changes

Reminders

- Remember to work through each of the bullet prompts on the template

T6. Evidence form (EF)

Changes

- At bottom of form - box to note where IQ(s) are resolved
- Margin prompts inspectors to use symbols to denote key evidence.

Reminders

- Efs should include evidence of impact and not just details of provision observed

T7. Mid-point Update

Changes

- Template prompts the inspector to record and share the emerging judgement (J1 or J2) and to **highlight as appropriate** on the template

Reminders

- Use the template *in full* and ask *all of* the questions
- Any more evidence...?
- Note the headteacher's responses
- *Invite* headteacher to propose *provisional* areas for development either at the mid-point or at later meeting once they have had time to reflect

T8. Final briefing & Areas for Development

Changes

- Template prompts the inspector to record and share the final provisional judgement (J1 or J2) and to highlight as appropriate on the template.
- Template prompts the inspector to ask the headteacher if they understand and agree with the judgements
- Template prompts the inspector to share the provisional areas for development and remind the headteacher these are subject to QA.
- Template prompts the inspector to check that the headteacher understands and agree with the provisional areas for development.
- Template prompts the inspector to ask the headteacher if they wish to discuss any issues related to the conduct of the inspection.

Reminders

- Use the template in full

T9. Final feedback

Changes

- Template prompts the inspector to inform the audience that both the judgements and areas for development are provisional and confidential as they are subject to QA.
- Template prompts the inspector to remind the audience that the inspection has sought to answer the six/seven inspection questions.
- Template prompts the inspector to record and share the final provisional judgement and to highlight as appropriate on the template
- Wording on final question changed.

T9. Final feedback

Reminders

- Use the template in full.
- Record all responses accurately.
- Remind the audience that leaders have been fully engaged in evidence gathering. Do not engage in discussion or a recount of the inspection evidence at this stage. This is particularly important if the school indicates they wish to complain and/or are dissatisfied.
- Alert your QAR inspector if the school indicates that they intend to raise a complaint.

Aides-memoires

New A-Ms being written and will be finalised before the end of term

Conflicts of interest

- It is the responsibility of each inspector to ensure that their conflicts are up-to-date on the portal. Scheduling assumes that this information is correct.
- Ensure that you have read and applied section 7 of the Code of Conduct in making decisions about conflicts. If you are a diocesan adviser, please also discuss potential conflicts with your DDE.
- If you have any questions having taken these steps, please discuss with the SIAMS Team.
- From September, the notification email will include a sentence that confirms that you have checked for any conflict and that there is none.

Take note - new judgement wording!

Judgement wording

- Either...

“The inspection findings indicate that the school is living up to its foundation as a Church school and is enabling pupils and adults to flourish.”

- Or...

“The inspection findings indicate that the school has strengths as a Church school, but that there are also issues that leaders need to address as a matter of priority. These issues relate to vision/RE/collective worship and are listed in the areas for development.”*

Before giving the judgement make sure...

- ...that you have given the school every opportunity to provide you with all *relevant* evidence that is germane to the judgement
- ... that the headteacher *knows* that they have had every opportunity to do so
- ...that you have spoken to the duty desk if you are awarding J2
- ...that you have the reasons for your judgement ready and at hand
- ...and that all reasons relate directly back to the Inspection Questions
- ...that your manner has been consistently compassionate

Explaining the judgement

- It is important that the head understands the reasons for the judgement that you have reached.
- Explain the reasons and demonstrate how/when you asked for more evidence.
- Please do not labour use of the phrase that the school is either J1 or J2 – if possible, don't even use those terms.
- Instead, use the wording of the relevant judgement.

Sample report

- We will look at a sample report together.
- Please note: this is not offered as a perfect example. Do not copy extracts from it for any report that you write.
- The purpose of the sample report is to look at how:
 - School strengths can be written and how they differ from Key Findings
 - Areas for development should link directly to the IQs, whilst being contextually valid
 - Inspection findings tell the evaluative story of the school, fluidly incorporating all IQs
 - Contextual factors are important but are only referred to if appropriate to the Inspection Findings
 - The focus remains on impact, with pertinent illustrations to support
 - A school can be affirmed for its effective work even when there are shortcomings
 - The judgement emerges naturally from the Inspection Findings
 - The school will recognise itself and know that it has been understood

Sample report - RE

- The difference between IQ6 and IQ7 remains
- IQ6 – curriculum and subject leadership only – don't inspect teaching and learning
- IQ7 – teaching, learning and progress – *just write this as part of the main inspection findings*

Sample report...

...has just been put in the chat.

2. Gathering evidence

Inspection conversations – general points

- These should be different in tone from a clipboard-wielding grilling – you are in the role of interviewer not interrogator
- Have prompt questions on your EFs to ensure that you address everything that you need to for your LOE
- But...ensure that you fit these into a professional *inspection conversation* and that you are open to a change of direction if needs be
- Do all you can to put people at their ease – don't exert unnecessary power
- Probe and be gentle
- Be generous in your understanding – don't pick for perfection
- 'Draw out' not a 'catch out' culture
- Don't be pedantic

Inspection conversations – general points

- You are looking for a whole story. You might need to wait until the end of the day/s until the whole story makes sense – don't rush to judgement
- You are the expert in inspecting, and *they are the experts in the life of the school* – you need them and their knowledge
- Schools are unlikely to express things as eloquently as you - remember that you are immersed in this work and *your knowledge of inspection* is superior.
- *You are not superior* – there is a difference
- This should give you confidence to inspect – NOT to make a school feel inferior to you.
- Rigour can be exercised kindly & compassionately, justly & generously
- Inspect in a Christian manner

But what about when a head isn't engaging fully in this new approach?

- Your inspection relies on evidence – you have to get it
- Give every chance to produce evidence – and record when you ask
- No evidence produced/witnessed = no evidence of impact
- Hold your ground graciously
- Be insistent and persistent – it's an evidence-based process
- Be transparent about what you are thinking and why
- Remind them that the inspection is an evidence-based process
- Rise above arguments – maintain a razor-sharp focus on the purpose of your visit

Establishing context

- This is essential for you to conduct a fair and robust inspection
- Initial call is crucial – the head will be nervous – help them to feel at ease
- You must understand why the school has the vision that it has, and why they call it a theologically rooted Christian vision – so let them tell you.
- Listen, listen, listen – if you don't understand, ask in a different way
- How did they end up with what they have? What was the process? The thinking?
- Do they understand their community and its most pressing needs?
- And then, have they thought about it theologically? Don't ask using this wording!

Christian vision

- *Do not* under any circumstances bombard school leaders with what may be your superior theological understanding.
- Leave your theological worldview at the door – remember we are a broad church. Listen and understand.
- If you don't understand the thinking behind the school's vision, give them every chance to explain again.
- Ask questions of clarification gently, not implying that there is fault with their thinking.
- Put yourself in their shoes, try to see things from their perspective.
- This is not a power struggle – do not engage in power games.
- If you really cannot reach a point of understanding, call the DD.

Asking questions under IQ4

- There may be some sensitive issues that arise under IQ4 – related to gender, sexuality, race...
- Inspectors need to elicit relevant lived experiences about how people are treated but without individuals being put on the spot - vulnerable, exposed.
- Eg “Have any of you ever had the experience in school of feeling ‘different’ from those around you, for any reason?” If so... “what is it like being ‘different’ in this school?” Or “Do you feel that your identity is valued in this school? How?” Or “Would you say that this is a kind school?”
- There are lots of different ways of being different.
- Remember – be sensitive; don’t stereotype; don’t assume homogenisation of groups.
- Be available.

Role play of evidence gathering conversations

Meeting with governors

- *Focus on the inspector's style of discussion – how are they putting the school at ease and eliciting information?*
- *How are they ensuring that they have a comprehensive evidence base?*
- *What do you think is good about the style of inspecting?*
- *How are they ensuring clarity and collaboration, whilst retaining authority?*

3. Theologically rooted Christian vision

Theology of the vision

- Be familiar with the relevant FAQs when thinking through matters related to the theology that underpins the vision.
- You need to understand where the school is coming from and how they have framed their vision as being theologically rooted.
- Remember that we all have our own theological worldview even if we are not that aware of it.
- This means that matters of interpretation can appear to be obvious matters of right or wrong – they are not.
- Don't keep using the term 'theologically rooted'
- If in doubt, after doing everything that you can think of to understand, call the duty desk before telling the school that their vision is not ok

Theology of the vision

- Do

- Discuss
- Listen
- Have an open mind
- Listen some more
- Aim to understand

- Do not

- Tell the school that their theology is wrong
- Bamboozle anyone with theological language
- Make school leaders feel inadequate as a result of your words or actions

4. Quality assurance

Duty Desk

- Available to any inspector on any inspection **NEW**
- Please don't feel that you shouldn't call – this is a new Framework for all inspectors
- You *must* call before finalising a decision that a school's vision cannot be described as a 'theologically rooted Christian vision'
- You *must* call before awarding a J2 – until further notice
- Take Margaret's and David phone numbers with you to use if you can't get through to the duty desk
- Margaret – 07909 212568
- David – 020 7898 1008
- Please try the DD first though

QAR

- Will continue as normal
- Text/judgement must be supported by evidence
- Focus on impact
- Timescales remain unchanged
- Strengths – 1 per bullet – all positive
- AfD – 1 per bullet – if J2 all that apply must be listed. Each one must start with the J2 criterion sentence.
- Inspection Findings – start on page immediately after AfD
- Judgement after IF

Judgements

- New A-M9 contains the judgement wording. Copy & paste one or the other into the box under the IFs.
- Either, “The inspection findings indicate that the school is living up to its foundation as a Church school and is enabling pupils and adults to flourish.”
- Or, “The inspection findings indicate that the school has strengths, but that there are also issues that leaders need to address as a matter of priority. These are listed in the areas for development.”
- If the school is not an academy, delete any reference to ‘trust’

Complaints

- All schools have the right to complain, and each complaint will be adjudicated independently
- There is a new complaints policy that will take effect from September
- Just appealing the judgement based on no evidence will no longer be an option; complaints must be based on an inspector's failure to follow policy and procedure – including manner
- A complaint may include the claim that such failure had a detrimental impact on the inspection outcome
- Please give schools every opportunity to provide all relevant evidence throughout the day
- Please ensure that you keep headteachers updated
- Please follow all policies and procedures

Repository of knowledge – case studies

- We will be uploading case studies of schools to the SIAMS website - on your recommendation
- Process
 - If you encounter practice in any aspect of the Framework that you think could be part of the repository of knowledge, bring it to the attention of your critical reader
 - *You should not discuss this possibility with the school during the inspection*
 - You will need to describe it to the CR - with a focus on impact
 - If convinced, the CR will pass it to MJ/DT
 - If convinced, MJ/DT will contact the school asking if they would like to submit a case study
 - The school has the option to decline this offer
 - If they accept, they will be asked to submit a brief overview, photos, and a short video clip
 - The central team will upload the case study to the SIAMS website

5. Conduct of the inspection

General reminders

- Be organised – paperwork, LOE, questions, Framework, FAQs
- Be intelligently flexible – be led by the Framework and by the context of the school – use the school’s language
- Leave your preconceptions behind – be aware of your own worldviews and positionality
- Keep all information about a school/inspection confidential before the day of notification
- *Be kind* – inspect in a Christian manner at all times and in all circumstances
- Model this from start to finish
- It is statutory for there to be RE provision in KS5 – if there is not, then J2 applies for IQ6
- Read SoE

General reminders

- Your inspection findings should be rooted in primary sources of evidence not secondary. In other words, do not *rely* on what kite marks, Ofsted, or awards say about the school. Find your own evidence.
- Do not ask heads to send you evidence on a Saturday/a non-working day.
- For the purposes of SIAMS, governing bodies of federations are just the same as governing bodies of non-federated schools.
- Schools generally appear to be delighted that they will finally be inspected in a respectful and collaborative, context-specific manner.
- Schools should not feel that they are being inspected under the 2018 Schedule.
- Do not engage in any other tasks whilst inspecting, eg emailing.
- Do not get this wrong, *please*.
- The success of the new Framework is in your hands.

A Fresh Look at Inspection

groveeducation

A Fresh Look at Church School Inspection: Examining the 2023 SIAMS Framework



- The 2023 SIAMS Framework marks a significant break with previous approaches to the inspection of church schools. It is radically different in its use of qualitative evidence to reach judgments rather than grades. Yet it is radically the same inasmuch as it does not reimagine what it means to be a church school.
- This essential guide examines and explains the key changes and explores how schools can demonstrate their theologically rooted Christian vision and practice.

What does the Lord require of you?

Act justly. Love mercy. Walk humbly with your God.

Micah 6vs8

Q&A

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