

SIAMS New Inspector Training Application and Course Guidance 2024

The training course

- Statutory Inspection of Anglican and Methodist Schools (SIAMS) Inspector Training is managed centrally by the Church of England Education Office.
- The course is led by the National SIAMS Team.
- The cost of training is £1,500. The programme represents a significant commitment for the participant, and the Church of England Education Office. This is in line with the level of professional responsibility carried by inspectors in reporting publicly on the effectiveness of Church schools in response to the requirements of section 48 of the 2005 Education Act. Please consider the commitment before applying. Course fees are non-refundable in the case of withdrawal.

Cost

The cost covers:

- four taught days
- preparation tasks for each day
- access to all training materials and inspection documents
- a shadow inspection with an experienced inspector
- written feedback on assessed tasks
- the sign-off inspection process mentored and assessed by a Quality Assurance (QA) Inspector from the National SIAMS Team
- registration as a SIAMS Inspector
- enhanced DBS check

Trainee inspector requirements

The trainee inspector is required to:

- gain support from their Diocesan Director of Education (or MAST Head of Service) for their application or their representative
- attend all taught and inspection days in full
- agree with their employer/s at the application stage that they can attend the training and undertake inspections
- complete pre-reading tasks for taught days
- complete assessed tasks within given timescales
- carry out the required number of SIAMS inspections following completion of the training
- provide information required by the Church of England Education Office.

Inspection skills

There are three core inspection competencies:

- Apply a comprehensive knowledge & understanding of SIAMS documentation
- Manage inspection as a sequential process
- Communicate fluently both orally and in writing

All taught sessions and assessed tasks are directly aligned to these skills.

Elements of the training

Shadow Inspections

- Trainees will undertake a virtual shadow inspection guided by the tutors.
- The National SIAMS Team allocates an in-person shadow inspection for the trainee inspector.
- The in-person shadow inspection has assessed tasks attached. The tasks are assessed by the course tutors.

Sign-off Inspection

- The sign-off inspection takes place once the trainee inspector has successfully completed all four days of the training course and the assessed tasks linked to the shadow inspection.
- The Deputy Head of SIAMS allocates a QA Assessor for each of the sign-off inspections.
- Detailed guidance on the shadow and sign-off inspections is provided to the trainee inspector.

Assessment

- The requirements for assessment are made clear to participants at the beginning of the course as the tasks require time to be planned into diaries. Assessment is through written tasks linked to the training days and the in-person shadow inspection and sign-off inspection. Feedback is given for each task. It makes clear if the participant has demonstrated competency in the required skills, notes particular strengths and identified points for development. If participants do not meet the required standard, they will be asked to repeat the task.
- Detailed guidance and criteria are in place for the evaluation of report writing, feedback and the management of the inspection. These conform to Church of England Education Office guidance documents.
- Acceptance onto the course does not guarantee that trainee inspectors will be signed off as a qualified SIAMS inspector. In order to achieve Registered SIAMS Inspector status, trainee inspectors must successfully complete the training course and submit and pass all written assessment tasks connected to the shadow and sign-off inspections.
- When trainee inspectors have completed the sign-off inspection, they must not begin inspecting until they have been registered as an accredited inspector, have undertaken a Disclosure and Barring Service (DBS) Right to Work Check and received a clear outcome, received their Church of England Education Office inspector badge, and updated their details on the SIAMS Portal.

The application process

- The link to the online application form is published on the SIAMS Inspections webpage, on the Church of England website. It is also sent out to diocesan education teams.
- Prospective applicants are required to discuss their intention to apply to train to become a SIAMS inspector with their Diocese. The appropriate Diocesan Director of Education or Diocesan SIAMS lead will be able to discuss the prospective applicant's suitability for the role.

The support of the Diocese

- Applicants for New Inspector Training must have the support of their diocese in order to apply. This is demonstrated in Part 2 of the online application form, which asks applicants to confirm that they have spoken to the Diocesan Director of Education (DDE) or their representative to gain their support, prior to submitting their application.
- The Diocese will consider:
 - whether the applicant has a thorough understanding of Church school leadership and management, and the phases of education
 - whether the applicant has the interpersonal and communication skills (both spoken and written) that are required to effectively interact with all people in the school community and to probe for evidence
 - whether the applicant has the analytical and evaluative skills to process information, consider evidence and make sound judgements.

Level of commitment required

- Applicants must understand the level of commitment involved in becoming a SIAMS inspector.
- In addition to the initial commitment to New Inspector Training, SIAMS Inspectors must:
 - carry out at least three inspections per year (This is the minimum number of inspections deemed vital for the development and maintenance of inspection skills)
 - have the time and capacity to attend online annual national ongoing training for inspectors to maintain their registration
 - be willing to travel within reason in order to carry out inspections
 - obtain up to date and relevant DBS clearance and public liability and professional indemnity insurance.
- A SIAMS inspection involves a significant time commitment. This includes at least one day to prepare, one or two days gathering evidence in the school, and one day to write the report.

Eligibility Criteria

- The following experience, knowledge and skills are essential for successful completion of the training. They will, therefore, be used as criteria for acceptance onto the course.
 - Current or recent experience of leadership at a senior level in successful Church schools and a sound understanding of Church school leadership, which includes an up-to-date knowledge of:
 - a) the Christian character of church schools
 - b) the requirements for religious education and collective worship in church schools
 - c) the governance of Church schools
 - d) curriculum and assessment in schools
 - e) recent national developments in church school policy and practice
 - f) the Church of England Vision for Education.

- A commitment to the aims of church schools and a sound understanding of the Christian faith
- A fluent command of the English language and the ability to communicate both in writing and orally in a clear and engaging way
- Strong organisational skills, competency in IT, and the ability to follow protocols and procedures.

Note: The Church of England Education Office does not provide inspectors with a laptop/computer, phone, printing facilities, or email addresses. These are the responsibility of the inspector.

- Upon successful completion of the training, inspectors should be able to demonstrate the following three competencies:
 - a) apply a comprehensive knowledge and understanding of SIAMS documentation
 - b) manage inspection as a sequential process
 - c) communicate fluently, both orally and in writing.

Additional support

- In the application form, applicants are asked to outline any access or specific needs they may have that might affect the training or carrying out an inspection. It is important these are discussed at an early stage so that the National SIAMS Team will be able to offer the advice and support needed to make sure the trainee inspector has the opportunity to succeed.
- If you would like to discuss any of this before or after submitting your application, please contact David Tait, Deputy Director of SIAMS (david.tait@churchofengland.org).

Assessment of applications

- The National SIAMS Team assesses the training course applications using the criteria detailed above and confirms with the applicant whether or not they have been successful in their application or not. We recruit inspectors according to our geographical workforce needs.

Important note

- The National SIAMS Team reserves the right to make the final decision on whether a trainee inspector has successfully completed the training days, the assessed tasks and the sign-off inspection, and therefore whether they can be registered as an accredited inspector.

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