Discussion points for Trust leaders in preparation for their church schools’ SIAMS inspection

Background and context

From September 2023 although there is no legislative change to SIAMS Section 48 there is a new SIAMS Framework for Church of England, Methodist and joint foundation Church schools. This is, in part in response to the changing educational landscape and the move toward a Trust based school system.

Points to note

Although SIAMS will not inspect trusts, it will hold them to account for their responsibilities towards the Church schools within them.

Trust leaders will be expected to commit to enhancing the Christian character of any Church school within the trust. To this end, the school’s SIAMS inspector will have conversations with both school and trust leaders.

Information requested by the inspector on the context of the school will include how school (and trust) leadership is structured and organised and what authority is delegated locally.

Inspection Questions

The six inspection questions (quoted here from the Inspection Framework) could be used for discussions between trust and school leaders and with diocesan staff

* IQ1 How do leaders know that the school’s theologically rooted Christian vision transforms lives? How does the trust’s vision enhance this?
* !Q2 How do school and trust leaders know and ensure that the curriculum is an expression of the school’s theologically rooted Christian vision?
* IQ3 How do school and trust leaders ensure that the spiritual life of the school is enriching the lives of pupils and adults? How does collective worship contribute to this?
* IQ4 How do school and trust leaders ensure that, as a result of the theologically rooted Christian vision, the wellbeing of all within the school community is a formational factor in policy-making and practice?
* IQ5 How do school and trust leaders ensure that, as a result of the theologically rooted Christian vision, there is a culture of love, compassion, justice, responsibility, and forgiveness?
* IQ6 With reference to the expectations set out in the Church of England Statement of Entitlement for Religious Education, how do school and trust leaders ensure that the religious education curriculum is effective?

N. B Another excellent resource from the Foundation for Educational Leadership, ‘Bringing the Vision Alive’- Activity 9 Ethos Enhancing Outcomes: exploring 18 MAT Leadership issues.