

Introduction to Governance in a Church of England School

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Church of England Schools

- History/Trusts -Church of England Schools
- Types of Church of England Schools and what this means for governors
- Core governance functions
- Foundation governors
- Governing documents
- Admissions
- Key updates
- SIAMS for new governors

History of Church of England Schools

PRE 1800

Churches were amongst the first providers of Charity Schools known as Blue Coat Schools. These were maintained by volunteers to teach poor children to read, write, arithmetic & other necessary parts of education.

16th October 1811

The National Society was founded as the "National Society for Promoting the Education of the Poor in the Principles of the Established Church in England and Wales". Its aim was that "the National Religion should be made the foundation of National Education, and should be the first and chief thing taught to the poor"

1944 Education Act schools choice to become Voluntary Aided or Voluntary Controlled

Types of Church of England Schools

	VC (maintained)	VA (maintained)	Academy
Buildings	Generally owned by Diocesan trustees- repair and building costs with Local Authority. Playing Fields provided by LA.	Generally owned by Diocesan trustees, building repair and costs governors (10%) with support from LCVAP 90%. Playing fields from LA.	Owned by Diocesan Trustees, building costs and repairs responsibility of Academy Trust. Playing fields long lease.
Staff	Employed by LA	Employed by Governing Body	Employed by Academy Trust
Admissions	LA is admissions authority, must consult GB	Governing body is admissions authority, must determined policy and consult in line with admissions code	Academy Trust is admissions authority, must determine policy (cannot change on conversion)

Types of Church of England Schools

	VC (maintained)	VA (maintained)	Academy
Inspection	Ofsted SIAMS (not RE-follow LA RE syllabus)	Ofsted SIAMS (including RE follow Diocesan RE syllabus)	Ofsted SIAMS (RE depends on previous status of school and funding agreement)
Governance	Instrument of government- up to 25% foundation governors, ex-officio foundation governor	Instrument of government- foundation governors outnumber other governors by a majority of 2, ex-officio foundation governor	Articles of Association, Trust board of directors- if a MAT then directors appoint local governors -Scheme of delegation to local governing body/academy council- composition (categories) depends on scheme and previous status

Core Governance Functions

Types of governors

Elected staff and parents, Head Teacher, foundation including ex-officio (usually parish priest), Local Authority (maintained schools only) and in some cases co-opted.

Core Functions

All governors (regardless of category) have a duty to undertake three core elements of governance:-

- Ensuring clarity of vision, ethos and strategic direction
- Holding the headteacher to account for the educational performance of the school and its pupils, and the performance management of staff
- Overseeing the financial performance of the school and making sure public funds are well spent

Core Governance Functions

- Ensuring clarity of vision, ethos and strategic direction, key question to always consider...
 - ***“How will this improve the education and opportunities for children in our school”***
- How will actions:-
 - Sustain school into the future
 - Help succession planning
 - Benefit/develop links with community
 - Ensure good safeguarding practice

Core Governance Functions

- Holding Head Teacher to account for educational performance and performance management of staff
 - Balance between support and challenge.
- Overseeing financial performance and making sure money is well spent
 - Legal duty to ensure school budget is wisely and properly spent
 - Used to ensure every child receives best possible education
 - Need to ensure money is being used for the children you are serving now

Core Governance Functions

Useful reference document:-

[Understanding your data: a guide for school governors and academy trustees - GOV.UK \(www.gov.uk\)](http://www.gov.uk)

Sets out 7 themes of evidence to use as an evidence base when discussing performance, within your context and with examples of questions, considerations:-

- Pupil numbers, attendance and exclusions
- Attainment and progress
- Curriculum planning, staff and class sizes
- Financial Management and Governance
- Quality Assurance
- Safeguarding and Wellbeing
- School Community, staff, pupil, parents and governors

Core Governance Functions

More useful documents:-

- DfE governance handbook
[Governance handbook and competency framework - GOV.UK \(www.gov.uk\)](https://www.gov.uk/government/uploads/system/uploads/attachment_data/file/442222/governance-handbook-and-competency-framework.pdf)
- Trust Deed
- Instrument of Government or Articles of Association/Scheme of Delegation
- Regular School governor update from DfE (you can subscribe if don't already receive) :-
[School governance update - GOV.UK \(www.gov.uk\)](https://www.gov.uk/government/uploads/system/uploads/attachment_data/file/442222/school-governance-update.pdf)
- KCSIE 2021
[Statutory guidance overview: Keeping children safe in education - GOV.UK \(www.gov.uk\)](https://www.gov.uk/government/uploads/system/uploads/attachment_data/file/442222/kcsie-2021-overview.pdf)

Foundation Governors

- Appointed by Diocesan Board of Education or Parochial Church Council, nomination form which includes support from Chair and also ex-officio foundation governor (parish priest)
- Ex officio foundation governor- guidance
- Role of foundation governors (in addition to core functions/ general role):-
 - Special responsibility to ensure school adheres to its Trust Deed and that the guiding principles of the Church of England are followed in the governance of the school (e.g welcoming and inclusive atmosphere, school vision and ethos)
 - Continuation of distinctive ethos and character of the school
 - Active interest in RE/Collective worship
 - Link with PCC/Diocese
- All governors (not just foundation governors) need to understand and uphold the importance of the school's ethos and foundation governors can support other governors in this.

Governing documents

Maintained schools- Instrument of Government (including federations)

Describes the:

- status of the school,
- the composition of the governing body,
- the ethos of the school
- Trust Deed

Academies: Articles of Association & Scheme of Delegation



Admissions

- In VA schools the governing body is the admissions authority.
- In Academy the Academy Trust is the admissions authority
 - therefore responsible for own admissions policy which complies with the 2021 Code.
 - Also responsible for consulting on this once every 7 years and whenever there is a change proposed.
 - Just sent reminders out- model policy/consultation guidance

Key Autumn updates

Governors will need to be aware of:-

- KCSIE 2022- child protection policy reviews
- Teacher and support staff pay rises- budget implications/pay policy reviews
- Harper v Brazel (holiday pay case, zero hours/causal workers)
- Behaviour Guidance Sept 22 (review behavior policies)
- Suspensions and Exclusions Guidance Sept 22
- VA/Academies- Admissions code 2021 – admissions policy- any changes to consult on

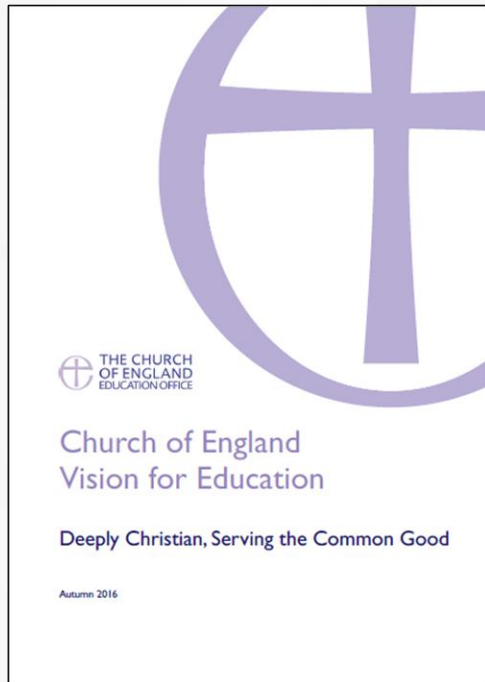
Statutory Inspection of Anglican and Methodist Schools

Church of England Vision for Education

The Church of England has set out a bold *Church of England Vision for Education* that is **deeply Christian**, serving the common good. Our purpose in education is to enable the children, young people and communities we serve to **flourish** as they experience education for wisdom, hope, community and dignity and discover **life in all its fullness** which Jesus offers.

Nigel Genders 2018

The core strands of the Church of England Vision for Education

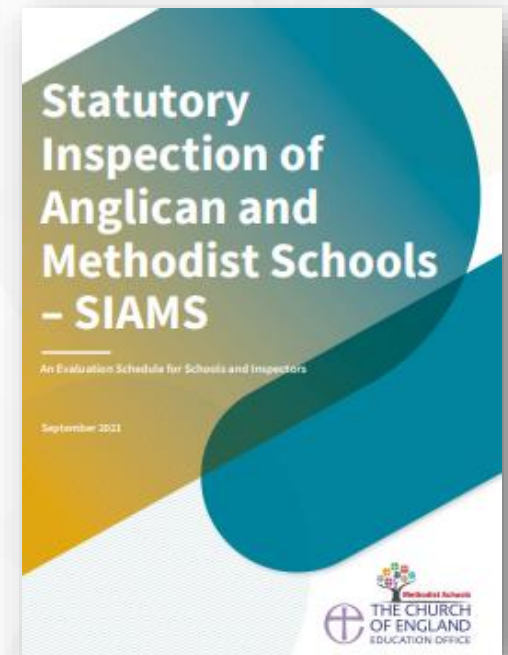


Educating for:

- ✓ Wisdom, knowledge and skills,
- ✓ Hope and aspiration,
- ✓ Community and living well together,
- ✓ Dignity and respect.

What is SIAMS?

- SIAMS elevates the importance of the school's vision and summarises what it means to be an effective Christian learning community
- The inspection schedule explores what it looks like for people to thrive and to live life fully in the context of a school
- SIAMS evaluates the extent to which the school is deeply Christian and serves the common good
- It recognises and celebrates the diversity of church schools and their communities
- **'What is the work of God in this place?'**



Context of your school

- Pupils with Special Educational Needs and Disability (SEND)
- Disadvantaged pupils, including service children
- Ethnicity
- % of pupils who speak English as an Additional Language
- Relationships with local churches
- Who do you consider to be your vulnerable groups?
- Pupil mobility
- Attendance -% year to date and last year
- Persistent absence -% year to date and last year
- Exclusions -% year to date and last year
- Faith admissions- how many?
- Staff turnover
- Significant events in the life of the school
- Changes since the last inspection

Over-arching question

How **effective** is the school's distinctive Christian vision, established and promoted by leadership at all levels, in **enabling pupils and adults to flourish**?

The question is explored through seven strands:

Strand 1: Vision and Leadership

Strand 2: Wisdom, Knowledge and Skills

Strand 3: Character Development: Hope, Aspiration and Courageous Advocacy

Strand 4: Community and Living Well Together

Strand 5: Dignity and Respect

Strand 6: The impact of collective worship

Strand 7: The effectiveness of religious education.



Possible Judgements

The assumption is that all schools will be **good**

They may **require improvement** – it is not good yet

Ineffective as a Church school.

Excellent – principles in the schedule are there to indicate what an Excellent Church School could look like

‘Excellent should be strikingly normal yet quite extraordinary.’ Margaret James 2021

Vision and Leadership

How well the school has developed and implemented an inclusive and distinctive Christian vision, monitoring its impact to ensure the school's original foundation is maintained.

How well the school lives out that Christian vision in relationships and partnerships with key stakeholders.

**Value added as a
Church School**

**Things that happen because
it is a Church school**

**How things stem from
your Christian vision**

Evidence of impact

Governance

How well do governors ensure that a robust and continuous self-evaluation process is in place that involves the school community in evaluating their effectiveness as a Church school?

Good descriptor

- Leaders, including governors, **explain how biblical teaching roots the school's vision** giving it coherence, relevance, and sustainability.
- Governors **articulate the school's vision** with passion and **recent relevant practical illustration**.
- All staff members and governors have opportunities to **develop their understanding of Church school education**.
- Leaders and governors ensure that there is an ongoing process in place that **evaluates the effectiveness of the school as a Church school**. This is based on evidence and analysis, includes most groups in the school community, and informs school improvement.
- Governors/academy directors maintain the school's original foundation by ensuring that the school is **engaged with diocesan initiatives** and can explain how the school has developed as a Church school since the previous denominational inspection

The Annual Report of the National Director of the Statutory Inspection of Anglican and Methodist Schools 2021 – 2022

Strengths:

- more involvement a school has with the diocesan education team and the local church, the more fully it is equipped to live up to its foundation as a Church school.
- Church school leaders' understanding is better amongst Church school leaders who engage meaningfully with their diocesan education team.

Areas to develop:

- Understanding of spirituality beyond collective worship remains mixed.
- more work is needed to ensure greater knowledge and understanding of faiths other than Christianity, and of Christianity as a global, multi-cultural faith.
- Evidence indicates that courageous advocacy is not accurately understood across the Church school sector.

National Update

National SIAMS update

Thursday 3rd November 10am-11.30am

Thursday 3rd November 6pm-7.30pm

JET further SIAMS update

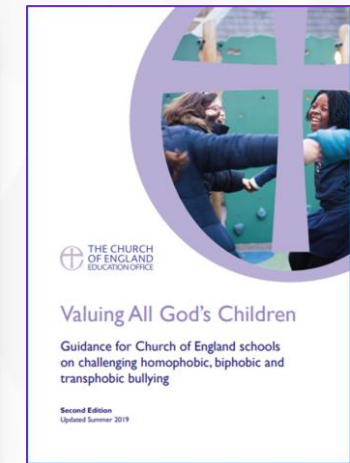
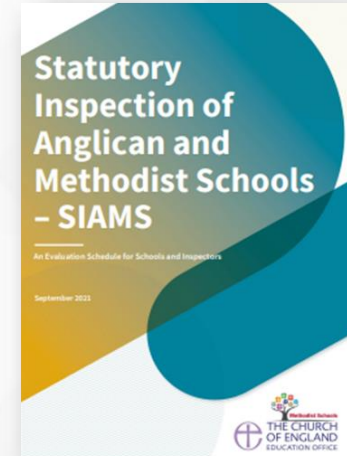
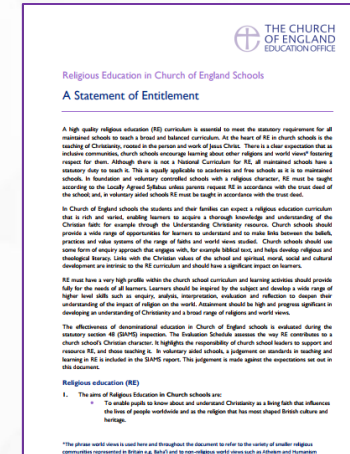
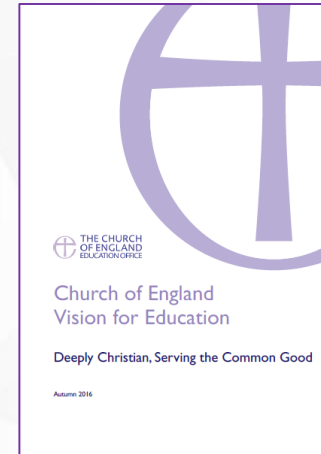
22st November 4:00 to 6:00pm

Things to think about ...

- Do you have a clear understanding of the context of your school and the community that it serves?
- Is your school's vision and its associated values relevant to your school?
- Is the vision grounded in a clear theology rooted in the Christian narrative?
- How do you keep up to date with current thinking in Church school education?
- Does your vision shape policies, actions and development priorities?
- Is your school 'welcoming to pupils with disabilities and learning difficulties, and by being inclusive of different faiths and of pupils from diverse backgrounds'?
- How do you monitor and evaluate the effectiveness of your school's vision and its work as a Church school?

Reading

- Church of England Vision for Education (2016)
- Statutory Inspection of Anglican and Methodist Schools (SIAMS)
- An Evaluation Schedule for Schools and Inspectors (2021)
- Resources from The Church of England Foundation for Educational Leadership – 'Bringing the Vision Alive' (2017)
- Valuing All God's Children (Updated 2019)
- The Fruits of the Spirit - A Church of England Discussion Paper on Character Education (2015)
- Spiritual Development Interpretations of spiritual development in the classroom (2019)
- Collective Worship Guidance (2021)
- The Statement of Entitlement for RE (2019)
- Understanding Christianity



Thank you

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