

SIAMS online update

11th November 2025



DIOCESE OF BRISTOL
TRANSFORMING. TOGETHER.

Headline data – 2024-2025

National:

901 inspections with a J1 judgement

11 inspections with a J2 judgement

872 Primary inspections - 863 x J1, 9 x J2

38 Secondary inspections - 36 x J1, 2 x J2



[Inspections — National Society for Education](#)



Headline data - 2025

Diocesan:

- 17 inspections
- 15 x J1 judgements
- 2x J2
- 16 Primary inspections, 15 x J1, 1 x J2 (IQ6 RE)
- 1 Secondary inspection, J2 (IQ3 CW)



Inspection questions resulting in a J2 nationally



IQ1 Vision and leadership x 4

IQ2 Curriculum and spiritual development
x 3

IQ3 Collective Worship and spirituality x 2

IQ4 Culture of wellbeing x 1

IQ5 Culture of justice and responsibility x 4

IQ6 Religious Education x 9

IQ7 (VA only, Quality of RE) x 5



Areas of significant strength in DoB schools

**ALL 17 schools =
strength on IQ1**

**13/17
strength in
IQ2 – SEND,
inclusion
and 14 in IQ4
wellbeing**

**14/17
strength in
IQ3
collective
worship**

**15/17
strength in
IQ6/7 RE**



Common development areas in DoB schools

**13/17 DPs in IQ2 –
spirituality &
spiritual
development**

**5/17 DPs in
IQ1 governor
monitoring /
evaluation**

**5/17 DPs in
IQ6/7 RE –
diversity,
breadth,
assessment,
effectiveness**



Things being celebrated this year – IQ1

- The importance of effective monitoring and evaluation across the board, particularly by governors and of vision impact, RE & CW
- The power of reciprocal partnerships – Church, Diocese, Trust, local community
- The impact of a Trust engaged with Christian Distinctiveness and with a vision that aligns well with school Christian vision
- An embedded commitment to Christian Character is celebrated, including focused cyclical training



Concerns identified this year – IQ1:

- Schools over focussing on the immediate demands of an upcoming inspection not demonstrating an embedded commitment.
- Challenges with governance - governors can often fail to change monitoring information into an evaluation of the effectiveness of the school's vision-driven work.
- Where school and MAT visions do not align, or a MAT adopts a 'hands off' approach to the school as a Church school there are missed opportunities for development and strengthening.
- Values support vision. They cannot take its place.



Things being celebrated this year – IQ2

- Inclusion and support for the most vulnerable is a priority for most schools
- In most Church schools, the Christian vision shapes both the taught and hidden curriculum, promoting spiritual flourishing.
- Where spirituality is deeply understood, it is embedded holistically.
- Strong vision driven curriculum expands horizons, raises aspirations, and encourages openness.
- Schools offer rich opportunities to explore what it means to be human.



Concerns identified this year – IQ2:

- Some schools need deeper curriculum reflection on how the vision shapes the curriculum.
- Some schools lack a deep understanding of spirituality which limits their ability to plan for spiritual growth intentionally.
- Spirituality must be central, not an add-on. A curriculum that reflects the school's vision can only be effective if there is sufficient scope within it for spiritual flourishing.
- Leaders should access training to understand the interconnectedness of spirituality, curriculum, and flourishing



Things being celebrated this year – IQ3

- Worship as central, inclusive, and scripture-rooted in Church schools
- Pupil involvement in worship planning enhances spiritual flourishing when leaders understand their context.
- Worship continues to be routinely described as ‘inclusive, invitational and inspiring.’
- Schools typically make use of a range of resources and practices that create a rich and varied diet of worship, rooted in Anglican tradition.
- A strong and reciprocal relationship with the local church is often cited as having a profound impact on worship and supporting spiritual flourishing.



Concerns identified this year – IQ3:

- Lack of a clear understanding of spirituality
- Lack of access to daily collective worship in some schools



Things being celebrated this year – IQ4

- Church schools are widely recognised as “places of nurture and care”
- Strong Christian vision enables contextually responsive support, contributing to human flourishing.
- Evidence from inspection indicates that pupils and adults from a richly diverse range of backgrounds and needs are treated well and find belonging and sustenance in Church school



Concerns identified this year – IQ4/5:

“IQ4 will remain a point of additional scrutiny next year in order to ensure and confirm that the evidence of impact is representative of the experience of those from a range of diverse communities, backgrounds and needs who attend Church schools. Greater assurance is needed that all Church schools without fail are places where nobody is left behind.”



Things being celebrated this year – IQ5:

- Schools are most effective where the internal culture of the school overflows into the manner in which a school looks outward to serve.
- Schools showed a marked improvement in understanding justice and responsibility, aligned with an age-appropriate grasp of the Kingdom of God.
- Age-appropriate understanding of justice and responsibility leads to meaningful action where pupils are empowered to be active citizens.
- Schools often formed meaningful partnerships, especially with churches and dioceses.
- Engagement with partners where the relationship is intentional, and an outworking of the school's Christian vision, appear to be broadening the horizons of both pupils and adults in the school



Concerns identified this year – IQ5:

- Some schools reduce justice and responsibility to “courageous advocacy” or pupils as “agents of change.”
- Leaders should aim for a deeper, more meaningful understanding of justice and how it can be achieved. It is not a progression from acting at a local, then national and finally an international or global level.
- Partnerships should be intentional, informed, and support this deeper understanding in the long term.



Things being celebrated this year – IQ6/7

- Quality subject leadership - where schools prioritise and resource well
- Teaching of and learning about Christianity
- Over the last four years, SIAMS evidence indicates that there is some gradual improvement in RE in Church schools



Concerns identified this year – IQ6/7:

- RE remains, as in previous years, the most commonly referenced area of development. The rate of improvement is too slow.
- Teaching about Christianity as a global, multi-cultural faith.
- Knowledge and understanding of religious traditions and worldviews other than Christianity and of non-religious traditions and worldviews.
- Use of assessment to support teaching and learning.
- Under resourcing of RE.
- Monitoring and evaluation of the subject in such a way that leads to improvement.



Minor tweaks to the SIAMS inspection 25-26



- Language – areas of strength, development points
- New report format – IQ boxes
- Three pupil groups during the day – suggested Church, Trust and Diocese conversations could be scheduled before the inspection day to accommodate this
- Added explanation on the purpose of each meeting on the timetable template



From the National Society, regards OFSTED

Where dioceses are not being notified of an Ofsted inspection. it is because the school's GIAS entry is not up to date with a diocesan contact email address. Without this, the Ofsted system is not able to include us in the notification email. Ofsted cannot change this, so please **check the accuracy of your entry in this regard.**

It is a clear and unambiguous part of Ofsted's methodology/operating guide that Ofsted should contact the diocese for any CE school inspection. Please make sure you **remind the inspection team to do so** when they call you.

Following the most recent pilots, Ofsted have now added an additional inspector into all schools for the first day. The purpose is to free up the lead inspector to both spend more time "calmly" (quote) with the head and to spend time sampling other inspectors' meetings to focus on consistency. **Do let us know if this is not happening.**

We encourage you to make use of the initial phone call to emphasise the impact on your school of being a Church of England school. Ofsted is supposed to celebrate a school's successes and positive defining features, and I believe you would see your religious designation as something worth celebrating. Emphasis on Christian vision, community engagement, and spirituality is likely to help an Ofsted inspector to understand the school as well as possible, so **do insist on being able to share this.**

Ofsted inspectors are still expected to read the most recent section 48 report. Obviously, they cannot take this as a primary source of evidence but hopefully, and especially if recent, the SIAMS report will help to provide an insight into a school's strengths in the areas of vision, worship, RE, and SMSC.



Upcoming events and training

Governor training (online, free) Vision & SIAMS [BOOK](#)

Thu 13th November 6-8pm

CE Headteacher Network (online, free) [BOOK](#)

Thu 4th December, 2pm

SPIRITUALITY AND COLLECTIVE WORSHIP (in person, ½ or full day) [BOOK](#)

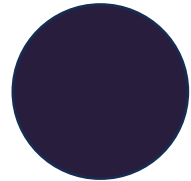
Monday 1st December 9.30-12.30, 1-3.30pm

Full SIAMS training day (in person) [BOOK](#)

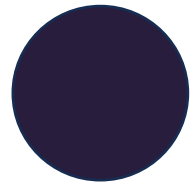
Wed 20th May 2026



Contact us with questions or support needs:



Laura.harris@bristoldiocese.org



Julia.watts@bristoldiocese.org

