

LDBE Mock SIAMS Guidance

In response to questions from schools about SIAMS preparation, I wanted to offer some clear and reassuring guidance.

The SIAMS Framework and SIAMS Information for Schools (September 2025) make clear that SIAMS is not a checklist or performance exercise. It is a contextual, reflective and dialogical inspection focused on how a school's Christian vision is lived out and the impact this has on pupils and adults.

Mock inspections can be unhelpful because they may:

- Encourage performance and rehearsal rather than authenticity
- Create unnecessary pressure and anxiety for staff
- Risk misrepresenting the reflective, supportive nature of a real SIAMS inspection, which will be conducted in a Christian manner.

SIAMS inspectors are not seeking scripted answers or polished presentations. Instead, they come alongside school leaders in professional dialogue, listening carefully to the story of the school and exploring real practice, lived experience and impact over time.

The most effective preparation is therefore:

- Robust self-evaluation over time, using the inspection questions in the Framework
- Evidence drawn from everyday practice, not created for inspection
- Honest, reflective conversations with staff, pupils, governors and church partners

This approach aligns far more closely with the purpose and spirit of SIAMS and ensures schools are well prepared to tell their story with confidence and integrity.

If you would value support with self-evaluation or reflective preparation aligned to the SIAMS documents, please do get in touch with your CDA or myself. As diocesan officers, we are very happy to walk alongside schools in this reflective work. However, we do not deliver mock SIAMS inspections, as this is not the role of diocesan officers nor the approach inspectors are directed to take, in partnership with the national SIAMS team.

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