

SIAMS Grade descriptors

Grade Descriptors: Christian Character

Outstanding (1)	Tick	Date
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Distinctively Christian values are made explicit and are deeply embedded in the daily life of the school. All members of the school community articulate the distinctively Christian characteristics of the school's values and the significant impact they have on the daily lives and achievements of learners. 		
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ The school's Christian character has a high profile and clearly shapes its approach to issues of attendance and pupil exclusion for all groups of learners. 		
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ There is a highly developed interpretation of spirituality shared across the school community. Learners have regular opportunities to engage in high quality experiences that develop a personal spirituality. They are passionate and confident to express their thoughts and views in considerable depth through a rich variety of styles and media. 		
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ The Christian character and values of the school have a significant impact on the spiritual, moral, social and cultural development of all learners. 		
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ The behaviour of learners is of the highest standard and relationships between all members of the school community are consistently attributed to the Christian character and values of the school. 		
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Learners are fully aware that Christianity is a multi-cultural world faith. They have a high degree of understanding and respect for diversity and difference both within the church and in other faith communities. 		
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Learners are excited and challenged by religious education. It makes a significant contribution to learners' spiritual, moral, social and cultural development and plays a major role in determining the Christian character of the school. 		
Good (2)		
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Distinctively Christian values are clearly expressed. This ensures that most members of the school recognise the distinctive characteristics of the school's values and identify how they affect their daily lives and their achievements. 		
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ The school's Christian character consistently informs its approach to issues of attendance and pupil exclusion for all groups of learners. 		
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ The school has a clear definition of spirituality that is understood by most adults. Experiences are identified in the curriculum, which provide opportunities for learners to explore spirituality. Learners respond well and are developing the ability to express their thoughts clearly and with confidence. 		
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ The Christian character and values of the school contribute to the spiritual, moral, social and cultural development of learners. 		
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Learners behave well and relationships between all members of the school community are generally linked to the Christian character and values of the school. 		
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Learners have some understanding of Christianity as a multi-cultural world faith and respect the diversity and difference within other faith communities. 		
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Learners readily recognise the importance of religious education in their lives. It makes a positive contribution to learners' spiritual moral, social and cultural development and to the Christian character and values of the school. 		

Satisfactory (3)		
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Most members of the school recognise the school's values as distinctively Christian and acknowledge the difference they make to their daily lives and achievement. 		
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> The school's Christian character sometimes informs the way in which it approaches issues of attendance and pupil exclusion. 		
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> There is some understanding of spirituality amongst the school's leaders. Opportunities for spiritual development are not always clearly identified in the curriculum or in other areas of school life. Consequently, learners' ability to respond to these experiences is at an early stage of development. 		
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> The Christian character and values of the school have a limited impact on the spiritual, moral, social and cultural development of learners. 		
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> The behaviour of learners is mostly good and relationships between all members of the school community are generally attributed to the Christian character and values of the school. 		
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Learners have only a basic awareness of Christianity as a multi-cultural world faith and this restricts their understanding of and respect for diversity within the Church. 		
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Learners have generally favourable views of religious education and acknowledge its importance in their lives. Religious Education contributes, although inconsistently, to learners' spiritual moral, social and cultural development and to the Christian character of the school. 		
Inadequate (4)		
Inspectors should use their professional judgement in making this judgement. The distinctive Christian character of the school may be inadequate if <i>more than one of the following apply</i>:		
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Members of the school community have very little understanding of distinctive Christian values with the consequence that these values make almost no impact on the daily life of the school. 		
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> The school's approach to pupil attendance and exclusion is not related to its Christian values and is ineffective. 		
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> There is no clear understanding of spirituality among the school leaders. The school has little idea of how to provide opportunities for spiritual development. Learners show little enthusiasm to engage and respond to experiences for spiritual development and demonstrate a lack of ability to express their thoughts. 		
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> The behaviour of learners is often poor and relationships between some members of the school community fall short of what is expected in a church school. 		
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Learners have little understanding or respect for diversity and difference within the Church and other faith communities. 		
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Learners express mixed or negative views of religious education and often fail to see its importance in their lives. Religious education makes a very limited contribution to learners' spiritual moral, social and cultural development and to the Christian character of the school. 		

Grade Descriptors: Collective Worship

Outstanding (1)	Tick	Date
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Across the school community great value is placed on collective worship; its place in school life and its impact on individuals is readily and clearly articulated. 		
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Collective worship is inspirational and inclusive. It engages all learners and its impact can be clearly discerned in all aspects of relationships and school life. 		
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Collective worship regularly includes Biblical material and Christian teaching and learners are able to relate this to the school's core values and their own lives. 		
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Learners can identify clearly the distinctive features of different Christian traditions in worship particularly local Anglican/Methodist practice, the seasons of the Church's year and Christian festivals. 		
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Themes raise aspirations, inspire a high level of spiritual and moral reflection and challenge learners to take responsibility for their own conduct and charitable social actions expressed in Christian terms. 		
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Learners understand the value of personal prayer and reflection as part of their own spiritual journey. They seek out opportunities for this in their own lives and contribute confidently and sensitively to prayer in worship. 		
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Collective worship has a strong focus on the person of Jesus Christ and learners understand the central position he occupies in the Christian faith. 		
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Collective worship has a strong focus on God as Father, Son and Holy Spirit. Learners recognize this and talk about it with an impressive degree of understanding. 		
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Learners are confident in planning and leading acts of worship, whether prepared beforehand or spontaneous, and have frequent opportunities to do so 		
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ A range of leaders, including staff, clergy and representatives from different Christian traditions, together with a variety of settings for acts of worship offer learners a rich experience of worship 		
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Monitoring and evaluation have a clear purpose and are managed efficiently. Feedback gathered from a range of stakeholders provides insight into how worship influences the life of the community and leads directly to significant improvement. 		
Good (2)		
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Members of the school community see the importance of worship in the life of the school and are able to talk about what it means to them. 		
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Learners recognise the value of worship, respond positively and participate willingly. There is evidence of the impact of collective 		

worship on all aspects of school life including attitudes, behaviour and relationships.		
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Collective worship often includes Biblical material and learners are able to make some links between this and their own lives and to the school's core values. 		
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Learners have an understanding of different Christian traditions in worship, particularly local Anglican/Methodist practice, the seasons of the Church's year and Christian festivals though cannot always articulate these fully. 		
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Themes are relevant and pay close attention to learners' spiritual and moral development. In response, learners take some action in the service of others. 		
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Learners understand the purpose of prayer and reflection in both formal and informal contexts. Many make use of prayer in their own lives and regularly contribute relevant and appropriate prayers to school worship. 		
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Collective worship often includes teaching about the person of Jesus Christ and learners have an understanding of his important place in worship. 		
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Learners are aware of God as Father, Son and Holy Spirit in worship and they are able to talk about this with some measure of understanding. 		
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Learners enjoy contributing within collective worship and are increasingly taking responsibility for particular aspects. 		
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Staff and clergy are regularly involved in planning the collective worship programme and leading collective worship programme and leading worship in a range of settings, with some involvement of other Christian traditions. 		
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Regular monitoring and evaluation identifies where improvement is needed and often informs development planning. 		
Satisfactory (3)		
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Collective worship is recognised as important in the life of the school community and is said to be valued. 		
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> There is limited but growing evidence of the impact of collective worship on the wider lives of member of the School community. 		
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Collective worship sometimes includes Biblical material but its relation to learners' lives and the school's core values is not always explicit. 		
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Learners have some understanding of a few different Christian traditions in worship mainly related to local Anglican/Methodist practice and to some Christian festivals. 		
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Themes support the school's core values, particularly in the area of moral development. Spiritual development may be more limited because planning for this is less focused. Occasionally learners are prompted to respond in service to others. 		
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Learners experience opportunities for prayer but there is limited understanding of its value and relevance to everyday life. 		

<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Learners have some knowledge of the life of Jesus Christ though his significance in worship is not fully understood. 		
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Reference is made to God as Father, Son and Holy Spirit on occasions but the significance of this has not been made explicit to learners. 		
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Learners behave well in worship, are attentive and respond to the different elements. However, they are often passive and do not yet take responsibility for aspects of worship. 		
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Planning provides a basic structure for collective worship but insufficient consideration is given to the coherent development of Christian themes. The main Christian festivals are usually included. Responsibility for planning lies with a few members of staff with little involvement from other members of the school community. There is limited variation in the pattern and setting for collective worship. 		
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Some feedback on collective worship is gathered that prompts small changes to the arrangements for worship although there is limited analysis of its impact on the school community. 		
<p>Inadequate (4) Inspectors should use their professional judgement in making this judgement. Collective worship may be inadequate if <i>more than one of the following apply</i>:</p>		
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Learners show at best half-hearted or little response to aspects of worship. It does not hold a distinctive place in the daily life of the school and learners cannot see its importance in their lives. 		
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Learners have limited awareness of different Christian traditions including Anglican/Methodist practice. The major Christian festivals are celebrated but learners gain little understanding of Christian beliefs and values from worship. 		
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Neither the place of the person Jesus Christ nor Biblical material are given prominence in worship and its key elements have a low profile. As a result learners are frequently not engaged in worship. 		
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ There is little to raise learners' spiritual awareness or to directly inspire them in the service of others. Prayer and reflection play a limited role in the pattern of school life so learners derive little spiritual benefit. 		
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Little monitoring and evaluation of worship occurs and no account is taken of learners' views. There is insufficient impact on improvement. 		

Grade descriptors: Religious Education

Outstanding (1)	Tick	Date
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Standards of attainment of all learners are at least in line with national expectations with a significant number attaining higher than the national expectations*. 		
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Attainment is high and progress is rapid in developing an understanding of Christianity and a broad range of religious beliefs. 		
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ In exceptional circumstances, where groups of learners attain below those nationally, the gap is narrowing dramatically over a period of time as shown by attainment data. 		
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Learners are inspired by the subject and learn exceptionally well. They develop and apply a wide range of higher level skills to great effect in their enquiry, analysis, interpretation, evaluation and reflection of their understanding of the impact of religion on believers. 		
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Learners are impressive in the way that they use creativity and originality to apply their knowledge and skills in religious education to their own personal reflections on questions of meaning and purpose. 		
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ The majority of teaching is outstanding and it is never less than consistently good. 		
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Highly effective use of assessment informs teaching and learning in religious education and exemplar evidence demonstrates progress made by learners. 		
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Religious education has a very high profile within the school curriculum and learning activities provide fully for the needs of all learners. 		
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ The religious education curriculum is rich and varied enabling learners to acquire a thorough knowledge and understanding of the Christian faith through a wide range of learning opportunities. 		
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ The religious education curriculum provides opportunities for learners to understand and to make links between the beliefs, practices and value systems of the range of faiths studied. 		
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Links with the Christian values of the school and spiritual, moral, social and cultural development are intrinsic to the religious education curriculum and they have a significant impact on learners. 		
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Rigorous and extensive monitoring and evaluation results in well focused action plans that demonstrably lead to improvement. 		
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Subject leadership has the highest level of subject expertise and the vision to realise ambitious expectations and improvement. 		

<p><i>*'National expectations' throughout the descriptors for religious education refers to those set out in the syllabus adopted by the governors of the school and the extent to which they may reflect the QCA's 8 point scale. Guidance on this may be revised as and when required.</i></p>		
<p>Good (2)</p>		
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Standards of attainment for the large majority of learners are in line with national expectations and sometimes higher. 		
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Learners make good progress given their starting points. Or, standards of attainment are average but learners make rapid and sustained progress given their starting points over a period of time. 		
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ In exceptional circumstances overall attainment may be slightly lower than national expectations but with some groups of learners making outstanding progress. 		
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Learners understand the value of the subject and they mostly learn well. They develop a range of skills including some of the following: enquiry, analysis and interpretation, evaluation and reflection. Learners have a good ability to apply these skills to understanding the impact of religion on believers. 		
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Learners show originality and creativity in applying their knowledge and skills in religious education and are developing the ability to apply this to questions of meaning and purpose. 		
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ The majority of teaching is good. 		
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Assessment procedures are in place and these inform planning, teaching and learning. 		
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Religious education has a high profile within the school curriculum and learning activities are differentiated to meet the needs of different groups of learners. 		
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Learners display a secure knowledge of many of the key aspects of Christianity and the Bible and the main practices and beliefs of the other faiths and cultures studied. 		
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Religious education makes a good contribution to the Christian values of the school and to the learners' spiritual, moral, social and cultural development. 		
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Effective use is made of a range of routine monitoring and evaluation procedures that accurately identify strengths and focus on raising standards that lead to improvement in pupil performance. 		
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ The subject leader effectively communicates expectations to senior leaders, governors and staff about improvement in teaching and learning in religious education and is well informed on current developments in religious education. 		

Satisfactory (3)		
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Standards of attainment for the majority of learners are in line with national expectations. 		
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Progress is satisfactory with learners making at least comparable progress to national expectations. Or, attainment is low but there is accurate and convincing evidence that progress over a sustained period of time is improving strongly and securely. 		
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ The quality of learning and engagement within the subject are generally good but with some variation in some year groups or key stages. 		
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Teachers sometimes, though not always, ensure that lessons are structured around the development of skills such as enquiry and reflection. 		
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Learners have a satisfactory knowledge and understanding of Christianity and some religions and beliefs but their ability to answer questions of meaning and purpose is limited. 		
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ The majority of teaching is satisfactory and there is likely to be some good teaching. 		
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ The religious education curriculum caters for the learning needs of some learners but those needing either reinforcement or more challenging learning activities are not routinely planned for. 		
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Some assessment takes place but this is inconsistent across year groups and does not always accurately inform future teaching and learning. 		
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ The religious education curriculum offers some opportunities to enhance the spiritual, moral, social and cultural development of learners. 		
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ The religious education curriculum offers learners some opportunities to understand the main teachings, beliefs and practices of Christianity and some other world faiths but implementation is inconsistent and is therefore not fully effective. As a result, learners do not have sufficient knowledge or understanding of religions nor of respect between diverse faith communities. 		
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Religious education has modest links to some aspects of the school's Christian values but these are not made explicit and are not consistently identified in teachers' planning. 		
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ There is regular monitoring of some aspects of religious education and self-evaluation is broadly accurate in identifying priorities for improvement that offer adequate challenge. 		
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ The subject leader is aware of current developments in religious education and incorporates some of these in his/her practice. 		

<p>Inadequate (4) Inspectors should use their professional judgement in making this judgement. The effectiveness of RE may be inadequate if <i>more than one</i> of the following apply:</p>		
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Standards of teaching, learning and assessment are inadequate with the result that standards of attainment and rates of progress, for the majority of learners and groups of learners, are consistently lower than national expectations. 		
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ The religious education curriculum makes little contribution to the Christian values of the school and its promotion of spiritual, moral, social and cultural development is limited. 		
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Insufficient opportunities exist to develop learners' knowledge and understanding of Christianity or other faiths and the impact on the lives of believers. 		
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Subject leadership is poor. Procedures for the monitoring and evaluation of religious education are weak and fail to identify essential improvements in teaching and learning. 		

Grade Descriptors: leadership and management

Outstanding (1)	Tick	Date
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Leaders consistently and confidently articulate, live out and promote a vision rooted in distinctively Christian values. 		
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Leaders readily articulate the impact of explicit Christian values on the lives of learners and on the whole life of the school. 		
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Leaders have a thorough understanding of the school's performance and distinctiveness based on effective and insightful self-evaluation. 		
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Self-evaluation involves all groups in the school community. It leads directly and convincingly to effective strategies for improvement and maintains a strong focus on meeting the needs of all learners. 		
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Leaders ensure that the whole curriculum is informed by a distinctive Christian vision that contributes well to pupil behaviour and attitudes as well as their spiritual, moral, social and cultural development. 		
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Parents, the local church, the diocese/district and the wider community contribute fully to school life so that there is mutual and substantial benefit for all groups including their understanding of local, national and global communities. 		
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ The development of all staff and governors as leaders in church schools is planned strategically with substantial benefits for the current leadership of the school. 		
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ The leadership of worship and RE is given a high priority and this leads to highly effective practice in both areas. 		
<p>Good (2)</p>		
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Leaders articulate and promote a vision based on distinctively Christian values. 		
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Leaders clearly describe the impact of Christian values on the learners and on the whole life of the school. 		
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Leaders have a good understanding of the school's performance and distinctiveness based on the school's self-evaluation strategies. 		
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Self-evaluation strategies lead directly to the school's improvement planning. As a result, achievement and distinctiveness have improved or previous good performance has been consolidated for all groups of learners. 		
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Leaders ensure that collective worship, RE and aspects of the curriculum are informed by distinctive Christian values that 		

contribute to learners' good behaviour and attitudes together with their spiritual, moral, social and cultural development.		
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Parents, the local church, the diocese/district and the wider community contribute fully to school life in such a way that there are clear benefits for learners, including their understanding of local, national and global communities. 		
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Effective use is made of opportunities that arise for the development of staff and governors as leaders in church schools, with clear benefits for the current leaders. 		
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> The leaders of worship and RE are given good support in fulfilling their roles and this has enabled them to bring about improvements or maintain the previous good practice. 		
Satisfactory (3)		
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Leaders provide a concerted approach to the distinctiveness and effectiveness of the school as a church school although this is not driven by a clearly developed Christian vision. 		
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Leaders have some awareness of the impact of distinctively Christian values on some aspects of school life although they are not clear about the difference they make across the whole school community. 		
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Leaders articulate the school's priorities as a church school although the links between this and the school's self-evaluation are not always understood and do not always lead to improvement. Consequently, not all learners progress as well as they might and the school's distinctive character is not fully developed. 		
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Worship, RE and other aspects of the curriculum are based upon Christian values but these values are present at an implicit rather than explicit level. As a result, whilst learners recognise the school as a church school, they are not always able to recognise the impact that this has on their spiritual, social, moral and cultural development and on their well-being. 		
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Parents, the church, the diocese/district and the wider community contribute to school life but this is not always on a regular or sustained basis and this limits the benefit to learners and their understanding of local, national and global communities. 		
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> The school provides some opportunities for the identification and development of staff and governors as leaders of church schools. 		
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> The improvement strategies adopted by the leaders of worship and RE, whilst having some positive impact, are not sufficiently rigorous to bring about sustained improvement. 		

<p>Inadequate (4) Inspectors should use their professional judgement in making this judgement. The effectiveness of leadership and management may be inadequate <i>if more than one</i> of the following apply:</p>		
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ One or more of the aspects from 'Focus for development' in the last inspection report have not been addressed in a way that has brought about improvement. 		
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Leaders do not have a coherent vision or strategic plan for the distinctiveness and effectiveness of the school as a church school. 		
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Self-evaluation strategies are insufficiently rigorous to bring about improvements in pupil achievement, well-being or spiritual, moral, social and cultural development. 		
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ The school's relationships with the diocese/district, church, parents and the wider community is weak and make little impact on learners' understanding of local, national and global communities. 		
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ The leadership of the school does not ensure that worship or RE have sufficiently high profile in the school. As result both are no better than satisfactory and show little sign of improvement. Arrangements for RE and collective worship may not meet statutory requirements. 		