

SIAMS 2018 and Values-based Education

Inspectors will make judgements on the following:

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

- **Vision and Leadership**
- **Wisdom, Knowledge and Skills**
- **Character Development: Hope, Aspiration and Courageous Advocacy**
- **Community and Living Well Together**
- **Dignity and Respect**
- **The Impact of Collective Worship**
- **The Effectiveness of Religious Education**

1. Vision and Leadership

SIAMS requirements	The VbE Approach
<p>a) To what extent is the school's vision and its associated values grounded in a clear theology firmly rooted in a Christian narrative? To what extent do leaders show awareness and understanding of current thinking in Church school education?</p>	<p>Values-based Education is centred around the study and enactment of core values. Christian values – such as those that form the 'fruits of the spirit' (love, joy, peace, longsuffering, kindness, goodness, faithfulness, gentleness and self-control) - are some obvious choices but these are not exclusive. Choose values that have a meaningful theological narrative that is important for your school.</p>
<p>b) How well do leaders ensure that the school's formal partnerships are supported, sustained and informed by the school's Christian vision and associated values? This includes how well school leaders work with the local diocese/circuit and churches.</p>	<p><i>The quality of Leadership is paramount because without it a values-based school does not develop. The headteacher/principal is key because he/she is the principle architect of the school's vision. We observe, that having the capacity to dream (use creative imagination) brings transformational positive energy (inspiration) into the formation of a VbE school - a prime characteristic of an altruistic leader. This, coupled with the seemingly endless capacity to access their own reservoir of uncontaminated self-energy, enables the leader(s) to remain stable and focussed in an educational context of incomparable complexity and challenge. It is through the commitment, drive, care and their ability to inspire others that the leader creates a sustainable school culture based on VbE, which has the active support of all members of staff, ensuring consistency of practice across all aspects of school life. Others will play a major part in the leadership of the school. However, we would argue that a VbE school encourages all members of the school, both adult and children, to be seen as leaders, taking personal responsibility for their thoughts and behaviour and sustaining an ethical vocabulary.</i></p>

2. Wisdom, Knowledge and Skills

SIAMS requirements	The VbE Approach
<p>How well does the school support all pupils in their spiritual development, enabling all pupils to flourish?</p>	<p>Spiritual development is a unique focus of the values-based approach to learning. Emphasis on the development of spiritual literacy impacts on behaviour, learning and pupil and community wellbeing. Reflection – through myriad ways - for personal spiritual development is promoted as a medium for every act of worship. Opportunities are promoted across the curriculum – through the arts but through every subject too – for awe and wonder.</p> <p><i>Reflection is the means through which we access our internal world of thoughts, emotions and feelings, and regulate them, which helps us sustain mental health and increases the capacity for self-determination. We argue that this is a key skill for children to learn - the fourth "R" of education. Reflective practices encompass a spectrum of activities including: Thinking about your work; reflecting on our behaviour and the impact it has on other people; reflecting on a story and then maybe having an opportunity to discuss your thoughts with others and hear differing perspectives; mindfulness and meditative practices. This last aspect draws on the research of Dr Dan Siegel (Siegel, 1999) and his work in the field of interpersonal neurobiology, rooting the practice of reflection (mindfulness) in an understanding of the parts and their functions of the human brain. Taking time for silence (brain breaks) and other meditative practices are key to nurturing self-energy, thereby promoting mental health and wellbeing, creating a calm and purposeful atmosphere.</i></p> <p>Keep a quick note of reflection focus areas and pupil responses to exemplify your work.</p>

3. Character Development: Hope, Aspiration and Courageous Advocacy

SIAMS requirements	The VbE Approach
<p>a) To what extent does your school's vision and its associated values develop aspiration in all pupils, giving them resilience to cope well when things are difficult and the perseverance to overcome barriers to their own learning and to make positive choices?</p>	<p>Resilience is an integral part of Values-based Education, brought about through the deep consideration of a range of values: their meaning, implications for our outlook, behaviour and choices. The association of a values-based approach to learning with inspirational role modelling brings hope and a sense of real possibility. Courageous advocacy is inspired by the ability to empathise with others, an emotion fostered through the consideration of a range of values and their implications for our personal existence. Collect anecdotal evidence, pupil and adult quotes and case studies to exemplify this aspect of your school's work.</p>
<p>b) Do leaders make sure all pupils have curriculum opportunities to look beyond themselves, ask 'big questions' and think globally about life and develop an understanding of disadvantage, deprivation and the exploitation of the natural world?</p>	<p>Values-based education works in explicit partnership with Philosophy for Children, a nationally renown and recognised approach that builds pupil participation in Socratic dialogue and rigorous debate around the 'big questions' posed by life. Keep some records of these debates – or just their titles – to evidence your work. Consider too how the VbE links with schools around the country can help your pupils develop an understanding about matters of disadvantage and deprivation. The VbE partnership with Harmony Education and Forest Schools explicitly explore our relationship with our natural world, and matters of sustainability. Develop exemplification around these and other fields of the VbE-inspired work to use as evidence.</p>
<p>c) How well does the school community connect its ethical and charitable activities to the school's vision and associated values? Do leaders provide opportunities for all pupils to engage in social action and to understand how they can challenge injustice?</p>	<p>The development of an ethical outlook is a principle aim of values-based education. <i>The main focus of VbE is on the selection, practice and living of an ethical vocabulary. The ethical vocabulary comprises a community chosen set of universal, positive human values such as respect, tolerance, resilience, courage and compassion. The selection of these words finds universal support from all the major world religions and non-religious groups such as the humanist society. These values words, when actively lived by people, become their character traits or virtues (values in action). We believe that they help children to develop what Neil has termed ethical intelligence (EI), which he argues is the most important of all the intelligences to nurture, as it is through EI that human beings can come together to solve world problems. This is because the development of an explicit ethical vocabulary enhances and enriches communicative competence, which we maintain could lead to a new universal narrative, problem solving, common language, based on values. For this to be truly realised it needs to be lived so the ethical vocabulary starts to become enacted through words and actions.</i> Promote this through pupil discussion about ethical issues, taking part in charitable causes to challenge injustice and promoting pupil engagement in larger ethical causes (screened for safeguarding purposes).</p>

4. Community and Living Well Together

SIAMS requirements	The VbE Approach
<p>a) To what extent does your school's Christian vision and associated values underpin relationships at all levels in the school community, enabling pupils to disagree well and to practice forgiveness and reconciliation? Is this reflected in the school's behaviour, exclusion and attendance policies?</p>	<p>Values-based Education will inform a school's approach to promotion of positive behaviour. It will encourage pupils to disagree well and will emphasise redemptive practices, encouraging pupils to take ownership and to ensure their actions serve the common good. This is supported through adult role-modelling.</p> <p><i>It is crucial that once a school has agreed its values then there is a discussion about how adults will model (live) them. Being a role model, a person looked to by others as an example to be imitated, implies being the sort of person you hope children will want to become. In other words, we show them the adults that the world needs them to be. In our words and behaviour, we model what it is to be a values-based human being. How we model this will, to a large degree, determine what young children think they should grow up to be. We do not underestimate the challenge this presents as the process highlights limiting aspects of ourselves that need to be processed and transformed. This is why we consider that parents, and adults who create a values-based school community, are so very important for the formation of a civil values-based society. They are in the forefront of positive, cultural transformation. In turn, the children become role models too.</i></p> <p>Consider how your school's policies, for example, your behaviour and anti-bullying policies, are rooted in a values-base. How do the values of respect, friendship, love, etc underpin your approach to teaching?</p>
<p>b) How well do leaders ensure there is support for good mental health in children and adults and a sense of belonging that embraces and celebrates difference?</p>	<p><i>The promotion of good mental health is central to Values-based Education.</i></p> <p><i>Its Inner Curriculum teaches us how to be aware and in control of our internal world of thoughts, feelings and emotions, enabling us to respond appropriately to others without hurting them or damaging our own sense of self. Indeed, it supports the development of a strong and secure sense of self, which develops the disposition of self-leadership sustaining wellbeing. We define self to be the innate essence of human consciousness, a healing energy that creates the space for the nurturing of wisdom. We argue passionately that a core objective of education should be to nurture self-energy, in the context of thinking about and applying positive values such as resilience, empathy, courage, altruism and justice.</i></p> <p><i>A focus on The Inner Curriculum enables students to be resilient and less susceptible to mental illness, which manifests in self-harming, depression and suicide. To help access the Inner Curriculum VbE schools use a variety of sources, such as Transactional Analysis (Berne, 1961), the Internal Family System (Schwartz, 2001), play, drama and art therapies, Philosophy for Children (Lipman, 1991), aspects of the formal curriculum that covers pupils' spiritual, moral, social and cultural development (SMSC), emotional literacy, values mentoring, counselling and reflection.</i></p> <p>Consider case studies that exemplify how the school's support of individuals and groups – both pupils and adults – have made a positive difference.</p>

5. Dignity and Respect

SIAMS requirements – as seen across the school's activities	The VbE Approach
<p>a) How well does your school's Christian vision and associated values uphold dignity and value all God's Children*, ensuring through its policy and practice the protection of all members of the school community?</p>	<p><i>The term atmosphere encapsulates other descriptors, such as ethos and environment. It refers to the palpable ambience that characterises a VbE school, which Neil describes in his book, From My Heart, transforming lives through values (Hawkes, 2013). Atmosphere is deliberately created by a number of characteristics which include; the quality of school displays; human-centric signage; cleanliness; the quality, organisation and management of resources; the external environment; the calm working atmosphere, break time and catering arrangements; how staff are valued and supported as people; friendly and courteous behaviour of adults and children. The atmosphere reflects the school's culture and fully supports its curriculum.</i></p> <p>Consider again how your school's policies and approaches are underpinned by your vision and values. How do they promote the dignity of all? What do the children say?</p>
<p>b) How well does the whole curriculum provide opportunities for all pupils to understand, respect and celebrate difference and diversity?</p>	<p><i>Curriculum refers to everything the school does to support VbE both implicitly, as described above in the description of atmosphere, and explicitly in ensuring that every aspect of the school's life and work reflects and is underpinned by the school's chosen values. All school policies are reviewed to ensure internal consistency with the school's values. The curriculum encompasses the formal, informal and hidden curriculum. The formal curriculum, ensuring that values are explicitly and experientially taught about in lessons, not only discretely in values lessons but as an element in all aspects of the curriculum. The informal curriculum includes how break times are managed and resourced. The hidden curriculum reflects the school's culture and can be seen in the expectations (school uniform), routines (movement around the school) and practices (sports days, parent/staff meetings) of the school. All these aspects are considered to be the responsibility of the school's leadership.</i></p> <p>How does the values-based approach correspond to stimulating and challenging curriculum, engaging and promoting higher order thinking for pupils of all abilities?</p> <p>Can you show curriculum examples of how respect for others and difference and diversity are celebrated? Can you find any examples of where children have shown positive discrimination?</p>
<p>c) Does the school have an approach to relationships and sex education (RSE) that ensures children are able to cherish themselves and others as unique and wonderfully made, and to form healthy relationships where they respect and offer dignity to others. (From 2020 onward)</p>	<p>A values-based curriculum supports healthy and safe relationships. Positive relationships are pivotal to this approach. Through introducing and using a wide ethical vocabulary, it teaches and models understanding and respect of the self and our emotions as well as those of others. Through Socratic dialogue, pupils are empowered to develop and hold their own views but to listen mindfully to those of others, and how to disagree well.</p>

6. The Impact of Collective Worship

SIAMS requirements – as seen across the school's activities	The VbE Approach
<p>Offers the opportunity, without compulsion, to all pupils and adults to grow spiritually through experiences of prayer, stillness, worship and reflection</p>	<p>Spiritual development is a unique focus of the values-based approach to learning. Emphasis on the development of spiritual literacy impacts on behaviour, learning and pupil and community wellbeing.</p> <p><i>Reflection is the means through which we access our internal world of thoughts, emotions and feelings, and regulate them, which helps us sustain mental health and increases the capacity for self-determination. We argue that this is a key skill for children to learn - the fourth "R" of education. Reflective practices encompass a spectrum of activities including: Thinking about your work; reflecting on our behaviour and the impact it has on other people; reflecting on a story and then maybe having an opportunity to discuss your thoughts with others and hear differing perspectives; mindfulness and meditative practices. This last aspect draws on the research of Dr Dan Siegel (Siegel, 1999) and his work in the field of interpersonal neurobiology, rooting the practice of reflection (mindfulness) in an understanding of the parts and their functions of the human brain. Taking time for silence (brain breaks) and other meditative practices are key to nurturing self-energy, thereby promoting mental health and wellbeing, creating a calm and purposeful atmosphere.</i></p> <p>Keep examples of comments pupils make about reflection and what it means to them to exemplify the impact of your approach.</p>

7. The effectiveness of religious education

SIAMS requirements	The VbE Approach
How effective is RE across the school?	Audit your RE curriculum to see how your values-based approach filters through this subject, underpinning and strengthening pupils' understanding and interest. How far does the pupils' understanding of values and their ability to talk about them enable them to appreciate similarities and contrasts between different religious faiths? How does the values-based approach correspond to stimulating and challenging curriculum, engaging and promoting higher order thinking for pupils of all abilities?