

**A report on**  
**Prendergast Community School**

**Stokes Avenue  
Prendergast  
Haverfordwest  
Pembrokeshire  
SA61 2RB**

**Date of inspection: March 2026**

**by**

**Estyn, His Majesty's Inspectorate for Education  
and Training in Wales**

**This report is also available in Welsh**

## About Prendergast Community School

Name of provider	Prendergast Community School
Local authority	Pembrokeshire County Council
Language of the provider	English
School category according to Welsh-medium provision	
Type of school	Primary
Religious character	*
Number of pupils on roll	446
Pupils of statutory school age	344
Number in nursery classes	61
Percentage of pupils eligible for free school meals over a three-year average (The national percentage of pupils eligible for free school meals over a three-year average in Primary is 21.7%)	13.9%
Percentage of pupils identified as having additional learning needs (a) (The national percentage of pupils identified as having an additional learning need in Primary is 9.2%)	6.1%
Percentage of pupils who speak Welsh at home	*
Percentage of pupils with English as an additional language	13.1%
Lead partner in Initial teacher education	No
Date of headteacher appointment	01/09/2021

A report on Prendergast Community School  
March 2026

Date of previous Estyn inspection (if applicable)	22/06/2017
Start date of inspection	02/03/2026

Data reported is sourced from the latest available Pupil Level Annual School Census. These figures may be slightly different to those observed during the inspection.

Further information is available from the Welsh Government My Local School website: [mylocalschool.gov.wales](http://mylocalschool.gov.wales)

- a. The term 'additional learning needs' is being used to describe those pupils on the SEN/ALN register of the school.

## Summary

Prendergast Community School is an inclusive, supportive community with a strong safeguarding culture. Pupils feel respected, valued, and able to influence school life through their pupil leadership groups. Pupils' good behaviour contributes to a calm learning environment.

Positive working relationships between staff and pupils foster pupils' enthusiastic engagement in learning. Many teachers use effective questioning, group work and feedback that helps pupils understand their next steps. Staff use assessment well to monitor progress, with particularly strong support for pupils with additional learning needs (ALN), those from low-income households and service families.

Staff, governors, pupils and parents help to shape the school's curriculum, and this means that it reflects the local community and the wider world well. Valuable experiences enrich the curriculum and promote identity and belonging well. Teachers often plan imaginative learning activities and experiences for pupils but there are sometimes too many options for pupils to choose from. Occasionally, learning does not meet the needs of pupils closely enough. The school's learning environments, including a range of interesting outdoor areas, spark pupils' curiosity and maintain their interest well.

Pupils communicate confidently in English and develop good Welsh language speaking skills. The systematic teaching of reading develops pupils as fluent readers. The writing skills of many pupils develop appropriately, though school leaders recognise the need for greater consistency in opportunities for extended writing. Mathematics teaching builds pupils' understanding of number and reasoning well, with growing opportunities for pupils to apply numeracy skills across the curriculum.

Leaders maintain a strong focus on pupils' well-being and progress. Monitoring and evaluation processes are robust, and professional learning supports improvements in teaching and curriculum design. Leaders use grant funding effectively to reduce the impact of poverty. Strong relationships with parents and partnerships with other schools enhance provision and help reduce inequity.

## **Recommendations**

We have made two recommendations to help the school continue to improve:

- R1 Refine the use of independent learning activities so that pupils gain a better understanding of their learning and complete work of a consistently high quality.
- R2 Continue to strengthen teaching to ensure that learning experiences and teaching approaches meet the needs of all pupils.

## **What happens next**

The school will draw up an action plan to address the recommendations from the inspection.

## Main evaluation

Prendergast Community School is a welcoming, inclusive learning community where maintaining a strong culture of safeguarding is a high priority. Pupils feel valued because staff treat them respectfully, take their concerns seriously and deal with issues fairly. Pupils are proud that they influence school life through their involvement in a broad range of pupil leadership groups. These groups help all pupils to build leadership skills and a strong understanding of their roles as citizens in the locality and the wider world. Overall, pupils behave well and this helps to create a calm environment where everyone can learn. Effective strategies to encourage good attendance have led to steady increases in recent years, including improvements in the rate of persistent absenteeism, an area that remains a challenge.

Working relationships between pupils and staff are strong. This helps most pupils to collaborate effectively and respond enthusiastically to learning. Many teachers and teaching assistants use questioning, partner talk and small group teaching well to reinforce prior learning and extend pupils' thinking. Teachers' useful feedback helps pupils to improve their work and understand their next steps. Staff are gradually increasing opportunities for pupils to consider in greater depth how they can refine their work.

Leaders and staff monitor pupils' progress carefully. They use assessment information purposefully to identify pupils' strengths and areas for development. Support for pupils with ALN, those from low-income households, and pupils from service families is a strength. Staff monitor their progress closely and collaborate within the school and with outside agencies to offer a range of effective interventions.

Staff, parents, pupils and governors have collaborated effectively to shape the school's curriculum, which is rooted in the history and culture of the locality and reflects its community well. The Prendergast Passport, a set of important experiences that strengthen pupils' sense of identity and belonging, enrich the curriculum well. The curriculum supports the development of pupils' spiritual, moral, social and cultural understanding well. It promotes pupils' understanding of religion, culture and world views, alongside a firm understanding of the opportunities and challenges of the modern world, including the safe use of social media. Leaders and staff reflect purposefully on the success of the curriculum, and this helps them to refine and strengthen it promptly when necessary.

Teachers plan imaginative and interesting independent learning activities and experiences across all areas of learning. In many instances, these tasks motivate pupils well, though sometimes there are too many for pupils to choose from. This makes it difficult for staff to ensure that pupils produce work of a consistently high quality. On a few occasions, teachers plan learning that does not meet pupils' needs; it is too difficult or too easy. In

these cases, pupils struggle to understand what to do or become frustrated because they do not feel challenged.

Staff have put considerable thought and effort into creating exciting learning environments in classrooms and around the school. The effective use of the exciting range of outdoor learning areas is a particular strength that ignites pupils' curiosity and encourages them to investigate their surroundings and resources. It enables all pupils to consolidate their skills purposefully in rich natural surroundings.

Most pupils listen and communicate effectively. A strong emphasis on developing pupils' English language skills from an early age means that most speak enthusiastically and confidently about their learning. By Year 6, many pupils express their ideas effectively.

A strong Welsh ethos and adults' regular use of Welsh helps pupils to understand that it is a living language and encourages them to speak Welsh themselves. Most teachers use suitable techniques, including drilling, questioning and singing, to help pupils to build a range of vocabulary and sentence patterns that enable them to speak with increasing confidence.

The school's focused approach to teaching of reading helps to develop competent, fluent readers over time. The majority of older pupils read with clarity and expression. Many tackle difficult vocabulary confidently and contribute thoughtfully to discussions about books.

### **Spotlight – a pupil-led school library promotes a culture of reading**

As part of their commitment to promoting reading for pleasure, leaders and staff have developed a welcoming school library that pupils and families use regularly. Following training, pupils from the school Senedd's librarian group manage the online library system and support the running of the library. Pupils visit the library at lunchtime and after school to change books, explore new texts or enjoy the calm environment. Pupils who use the library engage readily with books and enjoy the library experience. This positive reading culture is beginning to improve pupils' confidence and progress in reading.

Most younger pupils understand the purpose of writing and build a range of useful writing skills. Many older pupils write confidently across a range of genres and write at length with increasing skill in suitable contexts. Leaders have identified the need to ensure steadier progress in developing pupils' extended writing as they move from class to class.

The school's mathematics curriculum provides suitable opportunities for pupils to develop their skills progressively. Focused teaching helps pupils to build a range of strategies to strengthen their number fluency, accuracy and confidence. Most older pupils use written methods of calculation confidently and a majority explain their reasoning. Staff are

beginning to extend opportunities for pupils to apply their numeracy skills across the curriculum.

Many pupils make good progress in developing a good range of digital skills. Younger pupils grasp simple algorithms and follow instructions to control digital devices. Older pupils collaborate to create digital content, using coding programs and digital tools competently to control devices, and producing podcasts and scripts using artificial intelligence (AI) prompts.

Opportunities for pupils to develop their creative and fine motor skills are imaginative. Young pupils benefit from practical experiences, including clay modelling and large-scale outdoor painting. Older pupils, inspired by well-known artists, experiment with various media and techniques to create their own art. Plenty of large, outdoor play ensures that pupils move every day and learn to control their movements.

Senior leaders collaborate to sustain a culture that focuses on the well-being and progress of pupils. Leaders encourage staff to reflect on all areas of the school's work. They are not afraid to change direction if they identify aspects that are not working well enough. This enables leaders to make timely decisions that have a positive impact on provision and pupil outcomes. Governors are committed and keen supporters of many aspects of the school's work. They make appropriate use of the information they receive from the headteacher, staff and pupils to help them in their role as a critical friend.

Leaders have established a comprehensive monitoring cycle that ensures they evaluate the progress of school improvement priorities regularly. Evaluations from monitoring activities are robust and identify strengths and areas for further improvement. Professional learning links closely to improvements. In recent years it has focused on building leadership capacity, improving teaching, and creating relevant and exciting curriculum provision. This has contributed to the establishment of an effective leadership team, more consistency in the quality of teaching and a relevant and responsive curriculum.

Leaders use grant funding thoughtfully to reduce the impact of poverty on the attainment of targeted pupils. This includes providing interventions and securing opportunities to enhance learning for pupils, including supporting residential experiences. A strong emphasis on establishing productive working relationships with parents has improved attendance and behaviour and ensures that initiatives such as the 'Big Bocs Bwyd' and 'Preloved' contribute considerably to reducing inequity in the community. Effective collaboration with partner schools and the wider community extends curriculum opportunities and enables staff to share good practice within and beyond the local authority.

## **Additional information**

The school's arrangements for safeguarding pupils do not give any cause for concern

The school's arrangements for site management do not give any cause for concern

The school has appropriate arrangements for promoting healthy eating and drinking

Leaders and governors manage the school's finances appropriately, including the use of the pupil development grant. However, the school has a large deficit budget. This has been licensed by the local authority, and both parties have agreed a recovery plan.

## Evidence base of the report

Before an inspection, inspectors:

- analyse the outcomes from the parent/carer and pupil questionnaires and consider the views of teachers and the governing body through their questionnaire responses

During an inspection, inspectors normally:

- hold a meeting with parents/carers to hear their views on the school and its effectiveness
- meet the headteacher, governors, senior and middle leaders (where appropriate) and individual teachers to evaluate the impact of the school's work
- meet pupils to discuss their work, to listen to them read and to gain their views about various aspects of their school
- meet groups of pupils in leadership roles, such as representatives from the school council and eco-committee
- visit a broad sample of classes, including learning support groups and undertake a variety of learning walks to observe pupils learning and to see staff teaching in a range of settings, including classrooms, support groups and in outdoor areas
- where appropriate, visit the specialist resource base within the school to see pupils' learning
- observe and speak to pupils at lunch and break times and at a sample of after-school clubs, where appropriate
- attend assemblies and daily acts of collective worship
- look closely at the school's self-evaluation processes
- consider the school's improvement plan and look at evidence to show how well the school has taken forward planned improvements
- scrutinise a range of school documents, including information on pupil assessment and progress, records of meetings of staff and the governing body, information on pupils' well-being, including the safeguarding of pupils, and records of staff training and professional development

After the on-site inspection and before the publication of the report, Estyn:

- review the findings of the inspection alongside the supporting evidence from the inspection team in order to validate, moderate and ensure the quality of the inspection

## Appendix 1: Numbers – quantities and proportions

The report makes references to different quantities and proportions e.g. ‘*most pupils...*’ or ‘*very few pupils...*’. We use these terms to describe quantities and proportions as outlined in the table below:

nearly all =	with very few exceptions
most =	90% or more
many =	70% or more
a majority =	over 60%
half =	50%
around half =	close to 50%
a minority =	below 40%
few =	below 20%
very few =	less than 10%

## Copies of the report

Copies of this report are available from the school and from the Estyn website ([www.estyn.gov.wales](http://www.estyn.gov.wales))

The report was produced in accordance with Section 28 of the Education Act 2005.

Every possible care has been taken to ensure that the information in this document is accurate at the time of publication. Any enquiries or comments regarding this document/publication should be addressed to:

Publications Section  
Estyn  
Anchor Court, Keen Road  
Cardiff  
CF24 5JW or by email to [publications@estyn.gov.wales](mailto:publications@estyn.gov.wales)

This and other Estyn publications are available on our website: [www.estyn.gov.wales](http://www.estyn.gov.wales)

**This document has been translated by Trosol (English to Welsh).**

© Crown Copyright 2026: This report may be re used free of charge: (a) in any format or medium; and (b) may be translated by or on behalf of an education and/or training provider in respect of which this report relates into any language, in each case provided that it is re used and/or translated accurately and not used in a misleading context. The material must, in each case (including in the case of a translation) be acknowledged as Crown copyright and the title of the report specified.

Publication date: 07/05/2026