

**Pembrokeshire County Council
Cyngor Sir Penfro**



EDUCATION DIRECTORATE

**Proposal for discontinuation of Cilgerran
Church in Wales Voluntary Controlled
School and establishment of the same as a
3-11 Community School**

CONSULTATION REPORT

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Director of Education**

May 2026

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Foreword

Pembrokeshire County Council is responsible for promoting high educational standards and for delivering efficient primary and secondary education. Having the right schools in the right places and ensuring that they are fit for the 21st century learner is a challenge facing councils across Wales.

Meeting this challenge involves reviewing the number and type of school the Council has in its area and assessing whether or not best use is being made of its resources and facilities.

The Council reviews its provision on the basis of:

- Quality and future sustainability of educational provision
- Sufficiency and accessibility of school places
- The condition, suitability and standard of school buildings
- Value for money

This Consultation Report sets out the findings of the statutory consultation undertaken with regard to the proposal to discontinue Cilgerran Church in Wales Voluntary Controlled School and to establish the same as a 3 – 11 Community School. All responses received during the consultation period are recorded, together with a summary of the issues raised by consultees. These are accompanied by a clarification or rejection (as appropriate) of any concerns.

Pembrokeshire County Council will consider this Consultation Report at its meeting on 14 May 2026.

Steven Richards-Downes
Director of Education

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1. Introduction

Pembrokeshire County Council has a statutory duty to secure sufficient and suitable school places in its area and to determine whether it is making the best use of the resources and facilities to deliver the opportunities that children deserve.

At its meeting on 8th May 2025, Pembrokeshire County Council considered a report of the School Modernisation Working Group which outlines the findings of a review of education provision in the Preseli area. In particular, the review considered the extent of surplus places in the area, set against a significant decline in the pupil population.

The report outlined the current position in relation to Cilgerran VC School and highlighted its status as a 'Rural' school, in the context of the 'Presumption against the closure of rural schools' within Welsh Governments School Organisation Code.

The decision of Council on 8 May was:

That the Director of Education be authorised to commence Statutory Consultation with the St Davids Diocese on the proposal to discontinue Cilgerran Church in Wales Voluntary Controlled School and to establish the same as a 3 – 11 Community School.

In accordance with the School Organisation Code, a letter was sent to the St Davids Diocese on 13 May 2025 in order to seek its views on the proposal. The Diocese's response was considered by the County Council at its meeting on 17 July 2025. The decision of Council was as follows.

That delegated authority be granted to the Director of Education to undertake general consultation on the proposal to discontinue Cilgerran Church in Wales Voluntary Controlled School and to establish the same as a 3 – 11 Community School.

The subsequent statutory consultation was undertaken during the period 16 December 2025 to 30 January 2026.

This document represents the County Council's responsibility as part of the School Standards and Organisation (Wales) Act 2013 to publish a Consultation Report. This document:

- Summarises the issues raised by consultees.
- Sets out Estyn's view of the overall merits of the proposal (including their response in full).
- Responds to issues raised by consultees and Estyn, by means of clarification or rejection of the concerns, with supporting reasons.

2. Distribution of Consultation Report

This Consultation Report will be distributed to the following:

The Parents/Carers/Guardians, Staff and the Governing Body of the school affected by the proposal:	
Cilgerran VC School	
The Governing Bodies of other schools which the proposer considers are likely to be affected by the proposals:	
It is not anticipated that any other schools will be affected by these proposals.	
Elected Members:	
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Newly elected MSs following the May 2026 Senedd election Ben Lake MP (Ceredigion Preseli) 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Cllr John Davies
Relevant Town and Community Councils:	
Cilgerran Community Council	
Trade Unions:	
NEU, NASUWT, UCAC, NAHT, ASCLE, UNISON, UNITE, GMB	
Church in Wales and Roman Catholic Diocesan Authority	
St Davids	The United Archdiocese of Cardiff-Menevia
Local Authorities:	
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Carmarthenshire County Council Ceredigion County Council 	
Others	
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> The Welsh Ministers 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Estyn
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Dyfed Powys Police and Crime Commissioner 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> The Welsh Language Commissioner
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Partneriaeth – Regional Education Consortium 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Hywel Dda Health Board
Independent/Voluntary early years/Childcare providers	
Playgroup Settings	Childminders
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Cylch Meithrin Hermon Cylch Meithin Bwlchgroes Cylch Meithrin Crymych Meithrinfa Playdays 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> MG – Blaenffos LP – Boncath SD – Cilgerran FB – Cilgerran

In addition, this report will be distributed to all consultees who have specifically requested to be advised of its availability.

3. Consultation Arrangements and Learner Voice

General Arrangements

In line with the School Standards and Organisation (Wales) Act 2013, the Council produced a consultation document which was published on 16th December 2025, which also represented the start of the consultation period. The formal consultation period complied with the requirement to give consultees at least 42 days to respond, with at least 20 school days falling within that period. It concluded on 30th January 2026.

The Consultation Document was distributed/links sent to all statutory consultees listed on Page 5 of that document.

The Consultation Document was made available on the County Council's website at www.pembrokeshire.gov.uk/haveyoursay, with hard copies available on request.

Learner Voice

The views of the pupils at Cilgerran VC School were captured through a consultation session facilitated by the Headteacher. There were 66 pupils from years 3 - 6 involved in the consultation session with all pupil responses recorded anonymously. These responses are available at Annex B.

Pupils were asked what they thought about removing the VC status of the school with comments themed below, along with the Authority's response.

Pupil Comment	PCC Response
Pupils are worried that changes would mean they are no longer able to speak easily with the Headteacher and issues may take longer to resolve and lessons will start late.	The current proposal is only to change the VC Status of Cilgerran VC School. There is no proposal to federate with another school and no proposal to change the current leadership structure, albeit a key stated reason for the proposal is to enable future Federation, should it be required. If this proposal to discontinue Cilgerran VC school and establish the same as a community school, is implemented, pupils will continue to have the same access to the Headteacher and school leaders as they do now.
Pupils have concerns that if they merge with other schools and remove church status, the Headteacher and Deputy will have too much work to do	There is no proposal to merge schools or change leadership arrangements as part of this consultation. Their staff roles, responsibilities and workloads would remain unchanged. That said,

	as above, a clear reason for the proposal is to enable future Federation, should it be required.
Pupils are concerned it would be unfair to merge a school that is financially stable with one that is not.	There is no proposal to merge or federate the school. The consultation is only about changing the school to a community school. However, as above, should this proposal be implemented, future Federation with another/other community school/s would be possible.
Pupils are concerned that their connection to the church will be lost as it has always been a part of the school	The proposal relates to the legal status and governance of the school, not to remove the values that pupils associate with their church school. Regardless of the outcome, the school would continue to promote core values such as kindness, respect, care and community. It is acknowledged however that the school would no longer be a Church in Wales Voluntary Controlled school.
Pupils want to know will they still pray and learn about faith at school and whether traditions such as year 6 leavers service in church will remain.	Prayer and learning about faith can still happen at community primary schools in Wales. The curriculum for Wales includes a statutory requirement for Religion, Values and Ethics, which is mandatory for all learners from age 3. This curriculum is designed to be inclusive and respects all religions, beliefs and nonreligious worldviews.
Some pupils feel that decisions have been made without thinking about the children or the teachers.	Pupils' views form an important part of the consultation process and have been listened to carefully. They are summarised in this report, with the full responses given as an annex to it and will be read and considered by County Councillors who will make the decision.
Changing status could reduce enjoyment and opportunities for fun	The current proposal to change the VC status does not include changes to daily school life, routines or activities that pupils enjoy.

4. Consultation Correspondence

Volume and Profile of Responses Received

A total of 203 responses were received via the online web link, consultation response forms, emails and letters.

The profile of respondents is given below and reflects all descriptions given. This profile indicates respondents' role as part of the consultation and may indicate multiple roles, e.g. parent, staff and local residents. As a result, the total does not equal the total number of responses received.

Profile	Number
Pre-school parent	18
Parent/Carer/Guardian	75
Staff	11
Governors	5
Residents	102
Other	45

The following table shows the schools that these groups were primarily interested in.

School	No.
Cilgerran VC School	195
Other	6

5. Analysis of Consultation Responses

General Consensus

Where respondents chose to utilise the online or hard-copy form provided, they were asked to respond to the following questions directly relating to the proposal in order to establish which of the following statements best reflected their views. (It should be noted that none of the questions were mandatory, therefore some respondents may choose not to answer certain questions). The findings are as follows:

Question 1: Please indicate which of the following reflects your views on the proposal: To discontinue Cilgerran VC School and establish the same as a 3 – 11 Community School

	Total	
	Number	%
I do not feel strongly one way or the other	2	1%
I support the proposal	3	1.5%

I do not support the proposal	197	97%
Did not respond	1	0.5%
TOTAL		100%

Question 2: Please provide any alternatives you have to the Councils proposal.

There were 137 responses to this question with four key themes identified. These are shown below along with the Authority's response.

Alternative proposed	PCC response
Maintain the Status Quo and retain Cilgerran as a Voluntary Controlled School	The Council recognises that maintaining the status quo is preferred by many consultees. However, the proposal has been put forward to improve the school's long-term sustainability, and to ensure it can be more resilient with regard to future leadership and organisational challenges.
Pursue a Federation or collaboration model between VC Schools or a mixed governance solution	The other schools in the area are Community Schools. There are no nearby VC schools to federate with. Neither the Local Authority, nor school governing bodies have powers to federate voluntary schools with community schools.
Support executive or shared leadership arrangements which do not require a change of school category	It is possible for schools, which cannot formally federate, to work closely together through collaborative arrangements. A governing body can form a joint committee with governors at other schools. This can allow a joint approach to curriculum provision, reviewing and sharing policies and sharing facilities. However, these arrangements do not allow for the appointment of staff, and they are problematic because the governing bodies of voluntary schools are exempt charities. As such, the governors of voluntary schools are trustees and are legally required to act solely in the interests of that particular school. This stymies true collaborative working, and the approach does not enable the benefits that can be achieved through formal Federation.

<p>Invite expressions of interest from neighbouring schools to change to VC status</p>	<p>Community schools cannot become voluntary schools with a designated religious character through a change of category proposal. One or more community schools in the area would have to be discontinued and established as VC schools in the same way that this proposal proposes to discontinue Cilgerran VC school and establish the same as a community school.</p> <p>Given that all of the schools in the area are community schools, it is not considered logical to close several community schools to change their status to VC, when only one VC school would need to be closed and re-established to change its status to community, in order to enable a future Federation opportunity to be considered. Note that federations can contain up to 6 schools.</p>
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Impact on the Welsh Language

Respondents were asked their views on the likely impact on the Welsh Language

- What effects do you feel the proposal(s) would have on***
i) opportunities for persons to use the Welsh Language
ii) treating the Welsh Language no less favourably than the English Language

- Please consider if the proposal can be changed so as to have positive effects (or more positive effects) and to avoid or reduce negative effects on***
i) people’s opportunities to use Welsh?
ii) the need to treat the Welsh Language no less favourably than English

There were 135 responses to these questions. Most respondents believed the proposal would have a negative impact on the Welsh language. They highlighted that Welsh currently thrives at the school, supported by VC status and the church-school relationship, which provides meaningful opportunities to use Welsh beyond the classroom. Concerns were also raised that future federation, or shared staffing could reduce everyday Welsh use. A small minority felt statutory protections would be sufficient, but this view was outweighed by wider concerns.

Estyn’s response with regard to the impact on the Welsh language was as follows:

The proposal assumes, reasonably, that the planned change in school status will have a neutral impact on the Welsh language. The school would remain a category 3 Welsh medium school, with language provision continuing to support the objectives in the local authority’s Welsh in Education Strategic Plan (WESP). It is possible that some pupils may choose to transfer to other local schools, all of which also provide education through the medium of Welsh.

Question 5: Please provide any other comments on the proposal

There were 139 responses to this question, which were overwhelmingly opposed to the removal of Voluntary Controlled Status. The key themes identified broadly mirrored those raised elsewhere in the consultation. However, this section allowed respondents to include more detailed and personal comments illustrating the strength of feeling in the community. Whilst a breakdown and response are included later in this report, the key themes centred around future federation with other schools, loss of parental choice for faith schools and loss of ethos and identity.

Analysis of comments made during consultation

A list of all comments received during the consultation period is attached as **ANNEX A**.

The correspondence received reveals several issues which have been raised by consultees. These reflect support, areas of concern, suggested alternatives and opposition, and are listed below.

Comments in support of the proposal

A very small number of respondents expressed support for the proposal to remove the Voluntary Controlled status of the school.

Future Resilience	
	The removal of the VC status was supported to strengthen long term resilience and future proof the school against potential challenges
Governance Arrangements	
	Community status would provide greater flexibility if required in the future and simplify governance arrangements and decision making.
Leadership	
	Consultation seen as a proactive response to potential future Headteacher recruitment and leadership capacity pressures
Alignment with Local Government	
	Community Status would align the school with the majority of Local Authority schools, potentially enabling easier collaboration.

Comments against the proposal

The overwhelming majority of respondents did not support the proposal to remove the Voluntary Controlled status.

There is no evidence to support that change is required.	
	The school is performing well, financially stable and strong leadership team.
Loss of VC ethos and identity	
	Removing the VC status is seen as eroding the school's Christian ethos, values and historic identity, which many families regard as central to the school's character.
Will lose Community Cohesion	
	Removing the VC status will have a negative effect on community cohesion and engagement
Parental choice	
	The school is the only local faith-based primary school and removal of VC status would reduce meaningful parental choice.
Leadership and safeguarding concerns	
	Significant concern was raised that removal of VC status could increase the likelihood of federation and shared leadership, leading to reduced on-site leadership, safeguarding risks, and less personalised support for pupils.
Impact on Additional Learning Needs	
	Respondents feared that shared leadership or services would negatively affect continuity and provision for pupils with Additional Learning Needs
Financial and land ownership issues	
	Concerns were raised about the school being located on church-owned land and the legal, financial, and practical implications of a change of status
Welsh language impact	
	Many felt that VC status and the church-school partnership support strong Welsh-language use through real-life, community-based contexts beyond the classroom.

Response from Estyn

The Council has received a detailed response to the proposal from Estyn. Its overall conclusion on the proposal is as follows:

It is Estyn's opinion that the proposal is likely to at least maintain the current standards of education in the area.

A full response to the proposal from Estyn is attached in **ANNEX C**

While the response from Estyn is largely positive with respect to the proposal, with them being of the view that it would at least maintain the current standards of education, they raise some queries, which are addressed below:

The proposal did not identify whether the school currently benefits from additional financial support through the Church in Wales as a result of its VC status, and what impact, if any, there may be on the school's overall finances as a result of the proposed change

As a Voluntary Controlled school, the school does not benefit from any diocesan capital contributions or access church managed statutory funding streams. Responsibility for revenue funding and capital maintenance rests with the Local Authority.

Estyn states that the proposal does not provide information on the school's most recent Church in Wales section 50 inspection, or consider any alterations in the schools practice or curriculum that may result from the change.

The most recent Section 50 inspection of Cilgerran VC School judged the school's overall effectiveness as a Church in Wales school to be good, with good prospects for improvement, and confirmed that the school meets its statutory requirements for collective worship and Religious Education.

A change from VC to community school status does not materially affect the wider curriculum or educational standards. The principal changes relate to Religious Education, collective worship arrangements, denominational inspection, and governance. The school would continue to deliver the Curriculum for Wales in full, with Religion, value and ethics taught under the local authority syllabus and collective worship arranged in line with community school requirements.

Response from the Diocese

In accordance with the School Organisation Code, a letter was sent to the St Davids Diocese to seek its views on the proposal. The Diocese's response was considered by the County Council at its meeting on 17th July 2025.

In addition, the Diocese was a statutory consultee to this consultation exercise, and their full response is available at Annex E. A written response was also received from the Church in Wales (Annex D). These views have been considered and are included within the below analysis.

Identification of themes arising from the consultation

A qualitative analysis of these comments has been undertaken, and this reveals a number of themes, a detailed list of which, along with the Authority's responses, are given below. The aim of the analysis has been to capture, interpret and present the public's perception in relation to the proposal as faithfully as possible. All comments

have been afforded equal weighting, regardless of their source, or the extent of the content. It should be noted that some of the comments made below have been expressed in the context of both support and opposition to the proposal.

Diocese Concerns / Comments	Authority Response to Concerns Raised
<p>Legal and Equitable title issues – a new community school would have no right to occupy the premises</p>	<p>The Authority acknowledges that the school site includes land owned by the Diocese. Should the proposal proceed, the change of school category would be subject to appropriate legal agreements to ensure continued occupation of the premises. No change would be implemented without resolving land ownership and occupation rights in accordance with statutory and legal requirements.</p>
<p>Erosion of parental choice and statutory rights</p>	<p>The Authority recognises that the proposal would alter the availability of faith-based provision locally and that many parents value the current VC status. This impact needs to be balanced with the Authority’s responsibility to consider the long-term sustainability and governance resilience of the school.</p>
<p>Procedural unfairness – argument to remove VC status is unfair as proposal fails to identify which school could potentially form a federation with Ysgol Cilgerran</p>	<p>The proposal does not seek to identify or predetermine any future federations. References to federation are included to reflect the ability of the school to federate with community schools in the future, should the proposal go ahead. If the proposal is implemented, any potential future federation proposal would be subject to a separate consultation.</p>

General Concerns / Comments	Authority Responses to Concerns Raised
Loss of Church ethos and identity	<p>The proposal would change the school's legal status but would not remove religious education from the curriculum. However, it is acknowledged that the VC designation provides a distinctive ethos and governance model that many families value and that this cannot be fully replicated once removed.</p>
Impact on Welsh Language Use	<p>The school would remain Welsh-medium with statutory language protections. Consultees have highlighted that church-led activities currently provide additional informal contexts for Welsh use. This is reflected in the updated community Impact assessment.</p> <p>Estyn are of the view that the proposed change in school status would have a neutral impact on the Welsh language.</p>
Potential loss of full time Headteacher if school was to federate in the future	<p>This proposal would not create a federation but would enable one to be considered at a future date. The benefits and disadvantages of federation would form part of a consultation exercise, should a future proposal to federate occur.</p> <p>In a federated model, each school can retain its Head Teacher, although some federations share a Head Teacher.</p>
Impact on safeguarding and ALN	<p>Statutory safeguarding duties would continue unchanged. Consultees raised concerns that shared leadership could affect ALN provision by reducing continuity and personal knowledge of pupils, particularly vulnerable learners.</p> <p>Estyn were of the view that there would be no material impact on pupils, including those eligible for free school</p>

General Concerns / Comments	Authority Responses to Concerns Raised
	meals and those with additional learning needs, as a result of a change of status.
School is already successful and stable therefore why change?	It is acknowledged that Cilgerran VC School is performing well and financially stable. The proposal is based on longer-term strategic considerations rather than current performance concerns.
Loss of parental choice for faith school in the area	It is acknowledged that Cilgerran VC School is currently the only faith-based primary school in the local area and changing its status would reduce parental choice for families who actively seek church-based education.
Loss of community cohesion and fundraising	It is acknowledged that the school's strong relationship with the church underpins high levels of community engagement.
Concerns that the land the school is situated on is owned by the Church.	The Authority acknowledges that the school is currently situated on church owned land and any change to the status would require appropriate legal agreements.

6. Updated Community Impact Assessment

Impact Area	+/-
<p>Information on the proportion of pupils from the catchment area that attend the school</p> <p>Cilgerran Church in Wales VC School</p> <p>On the basis of the 2025 PLASC, 112 primary pupils lived in the Cilgerran school catchment and attended Pembrokeshire schools. Of these, 88 (78.6%) attended the school.</p> <p>Note the 2026 PLASC data was not available at the time of writing</p> <p>Due to their proximity to the local authority boundaries with Carmarthenshire and Ceredigion, a number of pupils live in Pembrokeshire but attend schools in those counties. On the basis of information obtained from the two authorities during the 2024 autumn term, around 10 pupils from the Cilgerran catchment attend primary schools in Carmarthenshire, and 49 in Ceredigion.</p>	<p>No change</p>
<p>Information on the proportion of pupils from outside the catchment area that attend the school</p> <p>Cilgerran Church in Wales VC School</p> <p>On the basis of the 2025 PLASC, 114 pupils attended Cilgerran VC School. Of these, 88 (77.2%) attended from the school's catchment area. The remaining pupils attended from the following catchments:</p> <p>Eglwysrwrw CP - 4 Maenclochog CP - 1 St Dogmaels CP – 5 Ysgol Bro Ingli – 2 Ysgol Bro Preseli – 9 Ceredigion – 4 Carmarthenshire - 1</p>	<p>No change</p>

<p>Given the current parental preference patterns, it is considered unlikely that this would change significantly following a change in school category.</p>	
<p>Information about any other facilities the school accommodates, e.g. youth club, playgroup</p> <p>Information about any other facilities or services the school provides, e.g. after school clubs, community library</p> <p>An Early Years Centre was built and opened in 2006. Mudiad Meithrin offers provision for 2-year-olds</p>	No change
<p>If accommodation, facilities or services are provided by a school, where they would be provided in the event of closure</p> <p>There would be no loss of facilities or services.</p>	No change
<p>Whether other facilities available in the immediate local or wider community will or could be enhanced in the event of a school closure (e.g. improvements to village halls, playgrounds, provision of holiday play schemes)</p> <p>There would be no loss of facilities or services. The community would continue to benefit from the facilities and services available.</p>	No change
<p>Information about the facilities and services provided at any alternative school</p> <p>No options require consideration of an alternative school.</p>	No change
<p>Information about the distance and travelling time involved in attending an alternative school of the same language category</p> <p>No options require consideration of an alternative school with respect to language category.</p> <p>However, the nearest Welsh medium VC school is at Letterston, 23 miles from Cilgerran.</p>	No change. However, this may become a negative impact for children who attend the school

	specifically due to its faith status.
<p>How parents' and pupils' engagement with the alternative school and any facilities it may offer could be supported (e.g. how pupils (and particularly any less advantaged pupils) will be helped to participate in after school activities)</p> <p>No options require consideration of an alternative school.</p>	No change
<p>Impact on health and wellbeing, e.g. if pupils would be less able to walk or cycle to school</p> <p>It is not anticipated that the proposal would have a negative impact on health and wellbeing, albeit this is possible with respect to the potential impact on pupils with regard to no longer receiving education from a faith school. In relation to access to the provision, the primary and secondary catchments will remain the same and pupils who currently walk or cycle to school will continue to be able to do so.</p>	No change/possible negative change
<p>Information about any wider implications the changes would have on public transport provisions</p> <p>There are no wider implications on public transport provisions as a result of the proposal.</p>	No change
<p>Information on wider community safety issues</p> <p>It is not proposed to change the scope of provision, merely the entity in which it is delivered. It is unlikely to result in any change to wider community safety issues.</p> <p>That said, one consultee felt that the church connection supported community cohesion, whilst a second respondent felt that the proposal would weaken community cohesion.</p>	No change
<p>Whether closure would encourage families with school-age children to leave the community or discourage young families from moving to the community</p> <p>It is not proposed to remove provision, merely to change the entity.</p>	No change

<p>What impact closure might have on other services provided locally, for instance if the school is the only remaining public building in a community</p> <p>It is not proposed to remove provision, merely to change the entity.</p>	No change
<p>Whether, or not, the school is a real hub of community life, used for other purposes –such as public meetings, local events, fetes, surgeries, and other get togethers –which would either cease or be diminished by being required to move elsewhere</p> <p>It is not proposed to remove provision, merely to change the entity.</p>	No change
<p>Whether or not the loss of the school, and potential families, will have a detrimental effect on the wider economy of the community</p> <p>It is not proposed to remove provision, merely to change the entity.</p>	No change
<p>How parents and pupils engagement with the alternative school and any facilities it may offer could be supported (e.g. how pupils particularly any less advantaged pupils) will be helped to participate in after school activities</p> <p>No options require consideration of an alternative school.</p>	No change
<p>The overall effect of closure on the local community (including the loss of school based facilities which are used by the local community</p> <p>There will be no loss of facilities or services as a result of any of the options for change. Proposal options include maintaining the status quo and a change of entity only.</p> <p>Pupils responding to the consultation expressed concerns regarding the loss of connection with the church, while a number of respondents believed there would be a negative impact on the Welsh language because they feel this is supported by the relationship with the church and church-led</p>	Possible small negative impact

activities. A very small number of consultees felt that community cohesion could be negatively impacted.		
How does the proposal fit with Well-being goals for Pembrokeshire/Wales		
Prosperous	The proposal is unlikely to affect prosperity in the area	
Resilient	The proposal is an enabler to making the school more resilient in terms of future opportunities to consider Federation	
Healthier	No material impact anticipated	
Equal	See Appendix 3 from the consultation document. There was a strong desire from consultees to maintain VC status and relationship with the church.	
Cohesive communities	Anticipated short-term impact while the change is new and potentially unsettling, before it becomes the new normal. A very small number of consultees felt the proposal could negatively impact community cohesion	
Vibrant culture & thriving Welsh language	No impact anticipated as the school would remain Welsh medium	
Globally responsible	No impact anticipated	

Appraising sustainability of the proposal	
Long term How the proposal balances the short term with safeguarding the ability to meet long term needs	The proposal increases the chances of the school continuing over the long-term in the context of an area with significant surplus places, by enabling future Federation opportunities to be considered.
Prevention How the proposal may prevent problems occurring or getting worse	Maintaining the status quo would not enable future Federation opportunities to be considered, and recruiting a suitable new head teacher when the vacancy arises, may be challenging.
Integration Considering how the proposal fits with the objectives of other public bodies	The proposal follows Welsh government statutory consultation requirements and is in line with Welsh government expectations regarding ensuring education provision in counties is providing value for money

<p>Collaboration How the proposal fits with working with other organisations or other parts of the Council.</p>	<p>Collaboration with other organisations, notably the school's governing body, is key to ensuring that the proposal is implemented and, ultimately, successful.</p>
<p>Involvement How people have been involved and how have we ensured that those people reflect the diversity of Pembrokeshire.</p>	<p>A wide stakeholder involvement is an inherent part of the statutory school organisation process in Pembrokeshire.</p>

7. Updated Impact Assessment on Quality and Standards in Education, and effect of different travelling arrangements

Additional consideration has been given, with regard to Quality and Standards in Education, and effect of different travelling arrangements, in light of consultee comments. These additional considerations should be read in the context of appendix 5 (Factors to be taken into account in approving/determining school organisation proposal) in the consultation document.

Quality and Standards in Education

Some consultees made comments which relate to quality and standards in Education.

Pupils at the school were concerned that lessons would start later than planned and that the Head and Deputy Head would have too much work, in the context of a presumption that the implementation of this proposal would then lead to a future Federation. By the same token, some consultees were concerned that there could be a negative impact on pupils with Additional Learning Needs.

However, these concerns essentially relate to the perceived impact of Federation as opposed to the impact of the proposal currently being consulted upon, which would be a change of status following the school's discontinuation and establishment as a Community School. Furthermore, Estyn made a clear statement with regard to Quality and Standards in Education as below:

It is Estyn's opinion that the proposal is likely to at least maintain the current standards of education in the area.

Effect of different travelling arrangements

No changes have been made in relation to the effect of different travelling arrangements, as a result of the consultation. This is because the only issue identified from the consultation in relation to travelling arrangements is the distance to the nearest alternative VC school in circumstances where the proposal is implemented and the parents/carers/guardians wish to maintain faith-based education for their child/children. This issue had already been identified in the impact assessment in the original consultation document.

8. Updated analysis of the alternatives outlined in the consultation document

Description	Advantages	Disadvantages	Assessment following consultation
Maintain status quo	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • No requirement for statutory school organisation process • Retains a Church in Wales VC school in the area • Meets the wishes of some members of the local community and parents/carers/guardians • Meets the wishes of the Diocese 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Does not enable future Federation to improve long-term sustainability 	Maintaining the status quo was by far and away the most popular option with consultees. Many felt that the proposal was trying to fix something that was not broken. Most concerns related to a perception that a future Federation would have negative consequences for the school. Status quo would also retain the link with the church, which was valued by many respondents.

Description	Advantages	Disadvantages	Assessment following consultation
			<p>However, when considered in the context of the findings from the review of schools in the Preseli area, in particular the large and growing number of surplus places in the area, there is a risk that the medium to long-term consequences of not taking action at this time to move the school closer to a position of longer term sustainability, could lead to negative outcomes in the future.</p>
<p>Change of status from VC to Community</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Changing the status to community school provides an opportunity in the future to federate with one or more local schools, all of which are community schools. This would improve long-term sustainability 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Requires a statutory school organisation process • Leaves the area without a VC school • Does not meet the wishes of some members of the local community, parents/carers/guardians or the Diocese 	<p>This option was supported by only a very small number of consultees who took the view that such a change would strengthen the long-term resilience of the school and was a proactive response to addressing potential future Head Teacher recruitment challenges in the context of a rural school.</p>

9. Summary of findings

The overall response to the consultation was positive with regard to the amount of engagement on the proposal.

Pupils were overwhelmingly against changing the status of the school, with the majority of the comments relating to a potential federation. This consultation relates to a proposal to discontinue Cilgerran VC school and re-establish the same as a 3 to 11 community school. It is not a proposal to federate. That said, it is understandable that consultees referenced Federation, given that a clear stated benefit of the proposal is to give flexibility to enable a future Federation proposal to be considered, should it be required. If a Federation proposal were to be put forward in the future, it would be subject to its own consultation exercise.

The vast majority of respondents to the consultation document indicated that they did not support the proposal. Among those who disagreed with the proposal, many felt that the school was doing well and there was no need for change. There were concerns relating to a loss of identity, potential community cohesion impacts, loss of parental choice, (as the only faith school in the area), future concerns regarding potential federation impacts, and legal concerns relating to the land. There was also a view taken that the Welsh language thrives at the school, partly because of the school's VC status and relationship to the church.

In contrast, a very small minority of respondents supported the proposal due to it being considered to provide future resilience, aligning better with the majority of schools, (which are community schools), simplifying governance and decision-making, and being a proactive response to potential future leadership challenges.

Estyn's opinion was that the proposal is likely to at least maintain the current standards of education in the area.

10. Proposal

This consultation report has provided a detailed analysis of the findings of the statutory consultation exercise (sections 3, 4 and 5), which was undertaken between 16 December 2025 and 30 January 2026.

It has reassessed the proposal, in light of comments received (sections 6 and 7), together with reassessing the alternative options originally put forward in the consultation document (section 8). Furthermore, it has considered reasonable alternatives put forward by consultees (section 5).

Following all of the above consideration and reassessments, the proposal to discontinue Cilgerran Church in Wales Voluntary Controlled school and establish the same as a 3–11 Community School is still considered the preferred option over the alternative options, in the context of the findings from the review of education in the Preseli area, which led to the proposal. Whilst there were various arguments submitted against the closure, and some constructive alternatives suggested, none of them addressed the school's longer-term quality and future sustainability of educational provision, in the context of the review of education provision in the Preseli area. As such, we consider the implementation of the proposal to be the most appropriate response to the reasons identified for the proposal.