

CASE STUDY

PRENDERGAST COMMUNITY PRIMARY (4-11)



SCHOOL CONTEXT

Prendergast Community Primary School is in the town of Haverfordwest in Pembrokeshire. The school roll is 412 pupils, 52 (12.7%) of whom are from Armed Forces families. The school is very proud of its strong links with families, the local community and the local base at Brawdy. The Headteacher, Deputy Headteacher and Service Families' Lead Teacher are the main points of contact for all issues concerning Armed Forces families. The school has recently achieved the **SSCE CYMRU Forces Friendly Schools Silver Award**. These awards are in recognition of the school's work in supporting Armed Forces children and their families.

<https://www.prendergastcpschool.org.uk/>

This case study highlights how Prendergast Community Primary used Principle 6 of the Thriving Lives Toolkit to evaluate how parents are engaged with the school.



SELF-ASSESSMENT GUIDANCE

Emerging practice	Developing practice	Embedding practice
<p>Schools with emerging practice will be actively reflecting on their activity and may be implementing actions to enhance their support, but to a small extent.</p> <p>School leaders will be beginning to raise awareness of what is needed to support Armed Forces children and young people more effectively and will be reflecting on the impact of their existing support strategies to strengthen these.</p>	<p>Schools with developing practice will be addressing this principle's question to a good extent, but this may be partial or yet to be enhanced through regular monitoring and evaluation.</p> <p>School leaders will have considered how they are addressing this principle's question and are taking steps to embark on a regular programme of reflection, monitoring and evaluation. Practice at this level is likely to be either not fully embedded or consistently applied by all staff, or both.</p>	<p>Schools with embedding practice will fully address this principle's question with well-established work that is routinely monitored and evaluated and showing evidence of impact.</p> <p>School leaders will have fully addressed this principle's question and regularly monitor, review and evaluate their strategies to demonstrate the impact. Practice at this level will be both embedded and consistently applied by all staff.</p>

EXAMPLES FROM PRACTICE

<p>6.1 <i>To what extent do you provide support to Armed Forces families?</i></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Positive relationships and effective communication practices are fostered and embedded between all school staff and Armed Forces families. On admission, Armed Forces families are made aware of key information on the school website and in the school's handbook / prospectus, including who the first points of contact are. The school website contains many useful links for parents on how they can support their children's learning. The school prospectus has a link to a parents/carers guide to giving children the best start when joining Prendergast. A bespoke information event is held for parents whose children may have additional support needs. The school acknowledges the families' needs and is sympathetic to term-time absence requests. 	<p>EMERGING DEVELOPING EMBEDDING</p>
<p>6.2 <i>To what extent do you help Armed Forces families build strong relationships with each other and with the school community?</i></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> The Leadership Team welcomes and actively promotes the involvement of Service families in family and community engagement activities, which enable opportunities for relationship-building with each other and other groups within the school community. Parents are involved in school activities to commemorate Remembrance Day, <i>Month of the Military Child</i> and other bespoke activities highlighting Service family life. The school website, and regular newsletters, highlight activities that help Armed Forces families participate in, and build strong relationships with, the school and local community. Armed Forces parents participate in the school's Hub, PTA, Parent/Toddler group and after-school activities which all help to establish and maintain strong links with the school community. Armed Forces parents were also involved in creating the school's Wild Garden. Serving personnel are regularly invited to school to work with pupils. 	<p>EMERGING DEVELOPING EMBEDDING</p>
<p>6.3 <i>To what extent do you liaise with parents and if appropriate local Armed Forces personnel about deployment and mobility?</i></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> The Headteacher / Deputy Headteacher / Service Families' Lead Teacher meets with individual families, when information sharing of personal circumstances is discussed to support the families when experiencing deployment and mobility. The school has strong links with the local military personnel. This ensures that they are kept up to date with issues that affect their school children. 	<p>EMERGING DEVELOPING EMBEDDING</p>

6.4 To what extent are deployments, separation or impending moves shared with all staff appropriately?

EMERGING
DEVELOPING
EMBEDDING

- After information is gathered about deployments and postings, it is quickly and sensitively shared with all relevant staff. This ensures that children and their families can be appropriately supported.

6.5 To what extent do you support Armed Forces children to communicate with a parent when they are away?

EMERGING
DEVELOPING
EMBEDDING

- Children are readily supported to communicate with family members when they are away in whichever way is most suitable.
- Children have access to resources which include digital communication systems to enable communication with parents with whom they are separated.
- Children are encouraged to keep records of their work and achievements to share with parents either during separation or on the parent's return.

SCHOOL LEADER ADVICE

School leaders must make every effort to get to know their families and ensure that they are welcomed and included within the whole school community. This is achievable through hosting bespoke activities for Service families to develop practices of fostering positive and strong relationships with each other and school staff. This leads to Service families engaging in wider school engagement activities and supporting the school's vision and practices. It is vitally important to facilitate opportunities for children of Service families to get to know each other within the school setting and to have an identified person / persons to communicate with during the school day. These practices support positive relationships between home and school.

Prendergast School is a community school where we feel valued and included.'

(Service Family parent, who together with other parents attended a family event to commemorate the Month of the Military Child in April 2023.)