

Dear

ATISN 26291 – Information regarding Manorbier Primary School and the rural school classification for the rural schools

Information requested

Thank you for your request which I received on 23 October 2025. You asked for:

Information in relation to Manorbier Church in Wales VC School, Pembrokeshire, and its classification on the Rural Schools List (Annex F of the School Organisation Code 2018), between 2022 and present.

Our response

Following a search of our paper and electronic records, I have established that the information you require is not held by the Welsh Government. However, I can address your question: *if no direct records exist for Manorbier Church in Wales VC School, provide any policy guidance, circulars, or internal notes explaining how the Welsh Government accounts for temporary capacity reductions or external incidents (such as fires) when determining rural school designation status.*

To introduce a presumption against the closure of rural schools, it was first necessary to designate which schools would be considered "rural". The designation was based on the National Statistics Urban-Rural Classification.

During the initial consultation, it was proposed that, at a minimum, the rural schools list would include primary schools located in areas classified as "Village in sparsest context" and "Other (hamlet or dispersed) in sparsest context". These classifications refer to schools situated in areas with very low settlement density within 10 km, 20 km, and 30 km radii, and within the sparsest 20% of Wales at all three scales.

Stakeholders were invited to provide feedback on whether these, or any additional schools, should be designated as rural for the purposes of the presumption against closure.

The majority of respondents supported the proposals. However, a minority suggested that other schools should also be included, providing supporting reasons. After careful consideration of all responses, the list was expanded to include an additional category: "Other (hamlet or dispersed) in less sparse context."

As a result, the final list of rural schools, set out in Annex F of the Code, comprises schools in the following categories:

- Village in sparsest context
- Other (hamlet or dispersed) in sparsest context
- Other (hamlet or dispersed) in less sparse context

The rural schools list is based on the most rural areas, as defined by national classifications. It does not consider school capacity or any reductions in capacity, although rural schools

are typically among the smallest. Temporary changes, such as short-term closures or adjustments, are not reflected in the list, as it only includes permanent designations.

The current list of rural schools will be reviewed in due course. If any changes are deemed necessary, a full public consultation will be undertaken at that time.

Next steps

If you are dissatisfied with the Welsh Government's handling of your request, you can ask for an internal review within 40 working days of the date of this response. Requests for an internal review should be addressed to the Welsh Government's Freedom of Information Officer at: Information Rights Unit, Welsh Government, Cathays Park, Cardiff, CF10 3NQ or Email: Freedom.ofinformation@gov.wales

Please remember to quote the ATISN reference number above.

You also have the right to complain to the Information Commissioner. The Information Commissioner can be contacted at:

Information Commissioner's Office,
Wycliffe House,
Water Lane,
Wilmslow,
Cheshire,
SK9 5AF

However, please note that the Commissioner will not normally investigate a complaint until it has been through our own internal review process.

Yours sincerely