

Wales sets out plans to end the physical punishment of children

The Minister for Children and Social Care, Huw Irranca-Davies, has today launched a 12 week consultation on the Welsh Government's proposal to remove the defence of reasonable punishment in Wales – part of a much wider package of measures the Welsh Government is taking to support children to have the best start in life, and to support their parents to do the best job they can.

The Welsh Government has a long standing record of working to ensure children have the best start in life and of promoting children's rights. This is why the Welsh Government is now intending to bring forward legislation to make it clear that physically punishing a child is no longer acceptable in Wales.

The proposed legislation would not involve the creation of a new offence. It would instead remove a defence to the existing offences of assault and battery. It would mean any adult looking after a child would no longer be able to use physical or corporal punishment against them.

The Minister said the Welsh Government's aim was to accelerate existing trends in the way parents in Wales discipline their children and to support them in feeling confident to choose positive and more effective methods of discipline.

Launching the consultation, Huw Irranca-Davies said:

“We all want to give our children the best start in life. As a parent of three boys myself, I know being a parent can sometimes be a challenging experience. Children do not come with an instruction manual and sometimes parents need guidance and support to help them raise healthy and happy children.

“Our knowledge of what children need to grow and thrive has developed considerably over the last 20 years. We now know that physical punishment can have negative long term impacts on a child's life chances, and we also know it is an ineffective punishment. Whilst physically punishing children was accepted as normal practice in previous generations, we know that it is increasingly being seen as less acceptable and parents feel less comfortable.

“We want parents in Wales to be confident in managing their children's behaviour without feeling they must resort to physical punishment. If there is any potential risk of harm to a child then it is our obligation as a Government to take action. Legislation was introduced many years ago to stop physical punishment in schools and childcare settings – now is the time to ensure it is no

longer acceptable anywhere.

“This is why as a Government we are bringing forward legislation to remove the defence of reasonable punishment, to make it clear that physically punishing a child is no longer acceptable in Wales.

“I am aware there are differing views on this legislation; this consultation provides an opportunity for everyone to have their say to help us try to address concerns as the legislation develops.”

The consultation closes on 2nd April 2018.

[A55 Abergele noise reduction measures to begin](#)

The area, to the west of Sea Bridge Road, has been identified as a priority area in the Welsh Government’s Noise Action plan.

In order to minimise any disruption to the travelling public to the absolute minimum, while maintaining safety, a narrow dual lane traffic management system will be in place along with a temporary 40 mph speed limit. This reinforces the Welsh Government’s commitment of no routine daytime work involving lane closures on the A55 between J11 and the English border until at least September 2018.

Work will also take place 7 days a week to ensure the scheme is completed as quickly as possible before the Easter period.

Transport Secretary Ken Skates said:

“I announced the go-ahead for this important work last year, and now everything is in place for it to begin.

“It’s being carried out during the winter, which is the quietest time on the A55, in order to keep any possible disruption to the absolute minimum. A narrow dual lane system shows we are committed to no routine daytime work involving lane closures on the A55 on this particular stretch until at least September this year.

“Noise levels are a serious issue, and I am pleased this is now being addressed in the Abergele area.”

The dual narrow-lane system is scheduled to be in place until March 12 between J24 and J23 westbound. Full details, including details of overnight

works are on the [Traffic Wales website](#) (external link).

[New Year signals an exciting time ahead for Amgueddfa Cymru](#)

The Minister was accompanied by Amgueddfa Cymru – National Museum Wales Director General, David Anderson. The hugely ambitious redevelopment of St Fagans, which has been supported by Welsh Government as well as the Heritage Lottery Fund, is due to be completed in October 2018. The new facilities and events are already proving popular, which bodes well for the future of the site as a world-class museum of international importance.

Dr Simon Thurley's review, which is also published in full today, describes Amgueddfa Cymru as one of the 'great museums of the UK' and a 'successful and thriving organisation'.

Minister for Culture, Tourism and Sport, Lord-Elis Thomas, said:

"Dr Thurley's review is one of the best reports of a public body that I have ever read, and is a key step to help the Welsh Government and Amgueddfa Cymru identify the most appropriate ways in which the organisation can thrive in the future, in what continue to be challenging financial times. As also outlined in the report on Historic Wales, the Welsh Government remains absolutely committed to enabling our heritage institutions to maximise the economic benefits that they bring to the people of Wales. The developments at St Fagans are an excellent example of the ambition and vision of Amgueddfa Cymru – and what can be achieved by working in partnership."

Dr Thurley's recommendations look at relations between Amgueddfa Cymru and Welsh Government; opportunities for commercial development as well as policy and governance, and future vision. Work is already underway between Welsh Government and Amgueddfa Cymru to address some of the challenges raised in the report, and determine how best to take the recommendations forward.

With the support of Welsh Government, Amgueddfa Cymru has enjoyed a number of successes since the report was commissioned. This includes record visitor figures, learning and inclusion programmes that are recognised as a beacon for the museum sector in the UK, and high-profile and award winning marketing campaigns, such as the one linked to the Dinosaur Babies exhibition at National Museum Cardiff in 2017.

David Anderson, Director General said:

“It is a pleasure to welcome the Minister to St Fagans today, at the beginning of an exciting year for Wales’ best-loved museum. The Thurley Review of Amgueddfa Cymru is a positive endorsement of the work of the organisation and its staff, as well as its future ambitions. We look forward to working with the Welsh Government on taking the recommendations forward in the coming months.”

Copies of the report are available on request.

[Latest Channel 4 drama made in Wales](#)

‘Kiri’ is the latest drama from award winning writer, Jack Thorne whose previous credits include National Treasure , Glue, The Fades, This is England ‘86, ‘88, ‘90, and The Last Panthers.

The four part serial drama stars highly acclaimed actress Sarah Lancashire (Happy Valley, Last Tango in Paradise), Lucian Msamati (Taboo, Luther), and Lia Williams (The Missing, The Crown).

It centres on the abduction of a young black girl named Kiri, who is soon to be adopted but disappears on an supervised visit to her birth family, that was arranged by her social worker (Sarah Lancashire).

The drama was produced by The Forge who made the decision to film in South East Wales after successfully applying for Welsh Government Business Finance to part fund the drama. Funding for the project was dependent on the production company spending a proportion on their production budget on Welsh Production Expenditure.

Culture Minister Lord Elis-Thomas said:

“Early indications suggest that 2017 was one of Wales’ best ever for TV and film production and I am delighted that that we are beginning 2018 with the broadcast of a quality and high calibre drama such as Kiri.

“During 2018 we will work hard to build on this successful record and continue to build Wales’ reputation as a premium filming location with much to offer.”

Economy Secretary Ken Skates said:

“This is the second 4 part serial for Channel 4 written by Jack Thorne, the first of which was filmed in Yorkshire, and I have no

doubt that the production team's decision to film in Wales was a direct result of the comprehensive package of support offered by the Welsh Government.

"Our support for Kiri was dependent on the production company spending a proportion of their production budget here in Wales, and this will have generated very real and tangible economic benefits in many of our communities.

"Indeed over the last 5 years, Welsh Government funded film and TV productions like Kiri have spent in excess of £100m within Wales, and this has created over 2000 full time equivalent job years, benefitted local supply chains and supported hundreds of businesses based here."

New Advisors for Violence against Women and Domestic Violence appointed

They will take up the role on a job share basis from 22 January. They will advise the Welsh Government on how most effectively to implement the Violence against Women, Domestic Abuse and Sexual Violence (Wales) Act 2015. Yasmin and Nazir will also work with victims and survivors and with other partners to shape and inform improvements in the way services are planned, commissioned and delivered.

Nazir Afzal OBE, was Chief Crown Prosecutor for North West England and most recently, he was Chief Executive of the country's Police & Crime Commissioners Association. During a 24 year career, has prosecuted some of the most high profile cases in the country and advised on many others and led nationally on several legal topics including Violence against Women & Girls, child sexual abuse, and honour based violence.

Yasmin Khan is the pioneering founder of a forced marriage and honour based violence charity, the Halo Project. Yasmin has worked with communities, and particularly women, in addressing inequalities in the field of employment, education and training.

Leader of the House, Julie James, said:

"Yasmin Khan and Nazir Afzal bring a wealth of experience and knowledge to this role and will provide valuable leadership in building on the work already done under this groundbreaking Act. I look forward to working with them both as we combat all forms of violence against women, domestic abuse, gender-based violence and

sexual violence.”

Yasmin Khan said:

“The appointment of a National Advisor for Wales demonstrates the Government’s commitment to tackling and eradicating all forms of violence against women experiencing, and at risk of domestic and sexual abuse and all forms of gender-based violence. I am absolutely delighted to have been appointed as Wales’ National Advisor and look forward to meeting partners, communities and stakeholders to ensure Wales can become one of the safest places for women and girls to live, prosper and feel safe.”

Nazir Afzal said:

“I am very pleased to be appointed to this important role in helping to deliver this pioneering Act. I look forward to working with the Welsh Government to tackle all forms of violence against women and domestic, sexual and gender-based violence. I want to help make Wales a world leader in eradicating these crimes and one of the safest places in the world to be a woman.”