

## **P-04-471 Mandatory Welsh Legislation to ensure Defibrillators in all public places – Correspondence from the Petitioner to the Committee – Newspaper article from the Liverpool Echo**

**Major victory for Oliver King Foundation as Government says all schools should have defibrillators**

David Cameron praises Mark's father Oliver King and presents him with Point of Light award



Mark King, Cllr Jake Morrison and Keith McAllister deliver a letter to David Cameron calling for it to be made law for defibrillators to be installed in all public buildings

The government is to announce that it wants all schools to have defibrillators as part of their first aid kits and will subsidise the the life-saving kit.

At the same time, Prime Minister David Cameron is to give Mark King of the [Oliver King Foundation](#) a special award recognising his efforts to make make sure all schools are equipped with them.

The news is a major milestone in the campaign by Mr King and the OK Foundation – supported by the ECHO – to make sure that no child dies in the way Mr King's son Oliver did.

The football-mad youngster Liverpool youngster died while swimming in the pool at King David School in 2011, aged just 12.

He had suffered cardiac arrest and was found to have died of sudden arrhythmic death syndrome (SADS).

But he could have been revived had a defibrillator been on hand.

The Department for Education is now looking for a supplier who will be able to provide the defibrillators at much less than the £1000 price so that all schools can have one as part of their first aid equipment.

Prime Minister David Cameron will be presenting Mr King with a Point of Light award which celebrates the extraordinary efforts of the OK Foundation over the last three years.

Revealing Mr King was to win the award, which was first awarded in the USA and is handed out by President Obama to outstanding individuals, Mr Cameron said: "Losing a child is the most painful thing that can ever happen.

"Mark has spearheaded a national campaign to help ensure that other parents don't have to face what he has been through.

"The new defibrillators that we are going to see in schools are a tribute to his inspirational leadership and I'm so pleased to be able to recognise Mark as a Point of Light."

The defibrillator programme in the Department for Education is being spearheaded by Lord Nash, the children's minister.

He said: "There is nothing more important than keeping children safe at school. That is why this government is today publishing updated guidance to schools on managing children with medical conditions.

"By securing defibrillators at a reduced price schools will find it much easier to install these potentially life-saving devices. We hope schools right across the country will take advantage of this."

The announcements mark a considerable shift in the government's position from when it initially refused to meet with the OK Foundation, which went on to top more than 150,000 signatures on an e-petition in order to make itself heard and force a government debate on the need for defibrillators in schools.

Since then it has worked tirelessly to ensure Merseyside schools have the equipment, and now every secondary school in Liverpool has one, and all schools in Knowsley and Wirral.

Some Liverpool primaries are also starting to buy them out of their own budgets, and Mr King visits to train staff on how to use them.

Mr King said the government's support was great news, but said there would always be more to be done in memory of his Oliver to make sure no other family went through the same heartache when the tragedy is so easily preventable.

He said: "It's a big turnaround from last year, they didn't want to know anything about us last year.

"They sent us away and said 'get 100,000 signatures and you can have a debate in parliament. We actually got 150,000 on the final count and they put us in Westminster Hall but since then we haven't given up.

"It's very very hard to get to get going every morning, to get up, to get your family going and get yourself going but we do it. It's easy to give in.

"The way I looked at it we can draw our curtains and nothing we can say or do will bring my Olly back, or we can open the curtains and come out fighting and take it to the government and that's what we've done.

"My Olly was special as every child is to the parents, there's nothing more important than the wellbeing of our kids, and I cannot sit down and look at the statistics of losing 19 young people a week because SADs goes undetected and undiagnosed because it shows no signs."

Mr King added he was looking forward to hopefully convincing Prime Minister Mr Cameron to bring in legislation that makes the machines compulsory in the same way they are required by law to have fire extinguishers.

He added: "I'll get his attention. I'm like a dog with a bone."