

P-05-799 Change the National Curriculum and teach Welsh history, from a Welsh perspective, in our Primary, Secondary and Sixth form Schools – Correspondence from the Petitioner to the Committee, 30.01.18

Ambitions and hopes of the petition “Teach Welsh history in our primary, secondary and sixth form schools and from a Welsh perspective”

Members of the Senedd and the Petitions Committee,

Before I note my ambitions on this paper, I urge to tell you, face to face rather in written form, to explain my ambitions for an United Welsh history curriculum. My passion towards this highly important matter cannot be professed or explained by mere words scribbled on this paper, which does not do justice to the hopes that we, the people of Wales want to be taught about our vast, deep, touching history. So please, I ask to come to express this matter through my own words, rather than the plain and quick explanations which I have listed here.

Sincerely – Elfed Wyn Jones

After reading the letter that the Minister for Education sent to the Chairman of the Petitions committee, I came the conclusion that:

- The letter did note the ambitions that we want to pursue with teaching Welsh history but lacked the methods to do that.
- That it suggested that units of Welsh history would be taught rather than a Welsh centric curriculum and it would leave some important branches out.
- A feeling that the letter suggests is to split Welsh history into units rather than teach it in a chronological way, and would still be vague in the information given.

These the ambitions of my petition –

1. Creating a United Welsh History Curriculum

Create an united Welsh history curriculum, so we can teach our children the main aspects and points that have made Wales the way she has formed today. What I mean with the word “United” is Welsh history that every child and young person should hear, no matter what are they live in. That includes historical information such as –

- The age of the Celts and Romans
- History of the Princes, the Saints and early Welsh people
- Glyndwr's Revolt
- Wales during the middle ages
- Wales in the Industrial Revolution (Nonconformist, empire, liberalism)
- Wales during the two World wars
- The development of the modern Wales (Political and social, the fight for the Language, the campaign for the Senedd and similar matters)

----- Lots of more points can be added, but i chose these as an example of Welsh history -----

2. Teaching local history

As well as teaching the main attitudes of Welsh History to ever child and young person in Wales, it is important that there is space in the history Curriculum to teach local Welsh history of the areas which they have been raised.

This could mean learning about old monuments or buildings, and understanding the local traditions and meanings, that would make them cherish their country and their local area.

It is important to note that there are people who have experienced the changing and development of these areas, especially the older generation who have participated in events in the areas and in matters nationally, with age old information that has been passed down through generations. This could be part of a pivotal learning process that we could use local people to participate and teach about their community in the schools. I was pleased to see this on BBC News Wales, but we need to ensure it inside the order of teaching Welsh History. Also, its important to use local resources to teach about Local History such as people, equipment and historical areas, and the national resources such as Castles, Workshops and Learning centres to teach National History.

By going around to collect names for my petition i kept hearing the same sort of line being repeated, which was "I knew more about American history and industry, than the land which I walked on".

3. History from a Welsh Perspective

It is important to make teaching history in our schools Welsh “centric” and concentrate on Welsh history and then develop forward to teach about historic events which happened in other countries and the World, describe what effect did they have on Wales. A lot of people are afraid that teaching Welsh history would “hide” other events that have happened in the world, but the answer I always provide is “if every other country in the world can teach their own history successfully and blend events and happenings around the world in their teachings too, then surely we can do the same thing”.

It is important that Welsh history is taught clearly in our schools because it teaches children to respect several aspects of the country, like respect towards their community, the people who lives in the community and country, the local and national traditions, and of course to respect the Welsh language when they learn about the struggles of the campaigners, which will give them pride and hope to learn and protect the language.

Welsh history needs to be taught from a Welsh perspective, and to be analysed by looking at how different matters and happenings had their effects on Wales and her people. This is lost now because there is lacking when it comes to analysing different viewpoints in Wales, and because of that we lose the Welsh narrative in the discussion. We need to look deeper on this matter by questioning all the past events and their effects on the Country and on the people.

4. Every aspect of Welsh history

It is important to teach every aspect of Welsh History, no matter if it is a negative or positive event in the Welsh timeline, and it’s important to do deep research into all of it. This would also look deeper at the perspective into the role Wales played in the building of empire, and the connection between Wales and different minorities today, which would let us as a nation look at the role the people of Wales and Welsh customs have had on the UK, Europe and the World.

Elfed Wyn Jones