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Ananova :

Paynes to meet Blunkett to discuss 'Sarah's law'

The parents of Sarah Payne are to meet Home Secretary David Blunkett to discuss the campaign for controlled public access to the Sex Offenders' Register.

Sara and Michael Payne will be joined by News of the World editor Rebekah Wade, whose paper has campaigned for the new legislation called "Sarah's Law".

The Paynes are expected to visit Mr Blunkett in London on Tuesday, in what will be their first meeting with the Home Secretary since their daughter was murdered.

But on Sunday the Government ruled out endorsing demands for Sarah's Law despite praising a newspaper's publication of photographs of four convicted paedophiles as "public spirited".

Deputy Prime Minister John Prescott said the News of the World was acting "more or less" like Crimewatch in publicising the details of the four men, who have failed to sign on the Sex Offenders' Register.

His remarks appeared to signal a warming towards the newspaper's long-running and controversial paedophiles

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campaign.

But a Home Office spokeswoman insisted there would be no "uncontrolled" access to the register, instead the Government was proposing tougher sentencing and allowing "community representatives" to play a role in managing sex offenders.

Mr Prescott told the BBC1 Breakfast with Frost programme: "If you look at the News of the World today I think what they are doing is more or less Crimewatch, they are putting some people's faces up and saying, 'Look, the police don't know where these are, please can you help us', and that I think is a public-spirited approach."

But he stopped short of endorsing demands for a Sarah's Law, which would give parents access to details about paedophiles living in their area, and warned that the issue was "more controversial".

Writing in the News of the World, Mr Blunkett vowed the Government would get tough on paedophiles and promised to bring a Bill before Parliament within a year which would result in "stronger sentences", including life for some sex offences.

Story filed: 04:07 Monday 17th December 2001

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