

## Parenting Contracts – Fact Sheet

The Anti-social Behaviour Act 2003 introduced new powers for LEAs and schools to enter into a parenting contract to help address children's behaviour and attendance at school. These powers came into force on 27 February 2004.

### What is a parenting contract?

- A two-sided formal agreement between a parent and either the local education authority or the governing body of a school.
- Voluntary arrangement – parents, LEAs and schools cannot be compelled to enter into a Parenting Contract.
- Parent agrees to comply with specified requirements (tailored to their situation).
- LEA/Governing Body agrees to provide specified support (tailored to parents' needs) to enable parent to comply.
- No sanction for refusal to enter into contract or breach of contract's requirements, but if LEA subsequently applies for a parenting order, refusal or breaches must be taken into account by the court.

### When is it appropriate?

- Can be used in cases of truancy or when pupil is excluded from school (whether for a fixed term or permanently)
- Appropriate where LEA/Governing body considers that parenting is a factor in the truancy/behaviour of the child and where parent appears to be in need of (and willing to accept) support.

### Why has it been introduced?

- Parenting often a strong influence in child's behaviour/attendance
- Recognition that parents need support

### What's in it for me?

- Enables school/LEA to address behaviour/attendance at early stage without being in role of "bad cop"
- Engenders productive relationship with parents and provides individualised support
- May help to prevent permanent exclusion – LEA can save on the cost of alternative provision
- A helpful addition to the LEA/school toolkit for improving behaviour and attendance.

**Guidance is available on [www.dfes.gov.uk/behaviourandattendance](http://www.dfes.gov.uk/behaviourandattendance) and may be ordered by calling 0845 602 2260.**