

ANTI-SOCIAL BEHAVIOUR ACT 2003

EXPLANATORY NOTES

COMMENTARY ON SECTIONS

Part 3: Parental Responsibilities

Section 19: Parenting contracts in cases of exclusion from school or truancy

53. This section sets out provisions for schools and local authorities to enter into parenting contracts. Local education authorities (LEAs) and schools will not be required to use parenting contracts and parents will not be required to sign them. For parents, signing a contract will be voluntary.
54. *Subsections (1) and (2)* explain the circumstances in which a school-related parenting contract can be made. They are where a pupil has:
 - been excluded from school for a fixed period or permanently; or
 - failed to attend regularly at the school at which he is registered.
55. *Subsection (3)* enables local education authorities and schools to make such contracts with parents. *Subsection (4)* defines a parenting contract as a document containing (a) a statement by the parent that he agrees to comply with the requirements laid down by the contract for the specified period; and (b) a statement by the local education authority or school governing body that they will provide or arrange support to the parent to help them comply with the requirements. *Subsection (5)* provides for the requirements to include attending counselling or guidance sessions. *Subsection (6)* defines the purpose of the requirements as improving the pupil's behaviour and/or securing his regular attendance at school. *Subsection (8)* means that parenting contracts cannot result in certain types of legal action by either party – these are actions for breach of contract and for civil damages.
56. This section complements section 25, which enables youth offending teams to arrange parenting contracts for parents of children who have engaged or are likely to engage in criminal conduct or anti-social behaviour.