

*What is a parenting contract?*

A parenting contract is an agreement between a parent/carer and the school.

You may be offered a parenting contract if your child has attendance or behaviour issues.

*My child has low attendance/ has been excluded and the school has offered me a parenting contract meeting what happens now?*

The school will invite you to a meeting to discuss the parenting contract. Your child may also be invited to attend depending on their age and understanding.

It is really important that you prioritise attending the meeting.

DO NOT WORRY. Parenting contracts are not a punishment and being offered a contract is not a bad reflection on parents in any way. The meeting is for you and the school to discuss your child's attendance or behaviour, the reasons behind it and ways in which it might be improved. You can also use it to discuss more generally any difficulties which you/your family are having and types of support that may be helpful to you. Before you attend the meeting, it is important to have a think about what you would like to get out of it. In particular:

- What do you think about your child's absence/behaviour and are there any reasons behind it which it would be helpful to discuss at the meeting?
- Are there any practical things which would help you to improve your child's attendance or behaviour e.g. breakfast club/regular phone calls with your child's form teacher or identified peer support for your child etc?
- Are you experiencing any particular difficulties at the moment and, if so, might the school need to be aware of these to be able to help or let you know where you can get help – e.g., benefits advice, parent groups, counselling, etc?
- What might you realistically be able to prioritise doing to improve your child's behaviour/attendance e.g., accompany them to the school gate every day, sign a daily behaviour report, attend parenting classes, etc?

If you are anxious about attending the meeting, ask if you can bring a friend or family member along for moral support. They won't be able to speak for you, but having someone there can often help.