

Parenting Orders

If you have been asked to attend court with your child the court must consider making a Parenting Order if your child is under 16 years, and may consider it if your child is 16-17 years old.

What is a Parenting Order?

A Parenting Order is an order made at the court to help and support parents when their child offends, or is at risk of offending or anti-social behaviour. It may impose requirements on you as a parent, but also ensures you are offered appropriate advice and support to manage your son/daughter's behaviour.

A Youth Court can make a Parenting Order on a parent or guardian of a young person aged 10-17 years who has been convicted of an offence;

Who can be given an order?

Any parent or carer that the young person lives with including step-parents, and also parents not living with the young person, but who have regular contact.

What happens if I am given a Parenting Order?

You will be required to attend counselling or guidance sessions aimed at helping you encourage your son/daughter to behave in a positive way, but the court may also make additional requirements such as ensuring you make sure your child gets to school.

How long is the order?

The requirement to attend sessions to support your parenting skills lasts for 3 months, but additional requirements set by the court may be made for up to 12 months.

How does the court decide to issue a Parenting Order?

Before making a Parenting Order the court may consider a report from the Youth Offending Team, who will first talk with you about your experiences as a parent and family circumstances. If parenting support is considered to be necessary, this will normally be offered on a voluntary basis, unless it has previously been

offered and refused. The court will consider the YOT report, and may then make, or not make, a Parenting Order.

Support offered by the YOT, whether on a voluntary basis or as part of a Court Order, may be individual or group work, and this will be agreed with you.

What if I can't attend arranged lessons or I am ill?

You must telephone the YOT and speak with the person named as working with you on your order, and explain why you cannot attend. If you are ill you may be asked for a medical note.

What if I don't attend court?

It is important that you attend court when required to attend, and this gives you the opportunity to support your son/daughter but also to express your views to the court. If your son/daughter is under 16 years you will be required to attend court, but the court can also require the attendance of parents of those aged 16 and 17 years appearing before them.

What if I do not keep to the requirements of the Parenting Order?

If you have no genuine reason for not meeting with the YOT as arranged with you, on the first occasion you will receive a formal written warning. Your YOT Officer will then meet with you, and work with you to establish why the order isn't working. If you continue not to keep to the requirements of the order you may be returned to court, and the court can then fine you up to £1,000 make an absolute or conditional discharge or Rehabilitation Order.

However, the Youth Offending Team will be offering you every support to try and ensure that this does not need to occur.

Complaints: If you are not happy about any element of the service provided by the Youth Offending Team, you should talk to your YOT Officer. If you still feel dissatisfied you can write or talk to the Youth Offending Team Service Manager at the address and telephone number below.

Equal Opportunities: We seek to treat everybody fairly and without discrimination. We will not accept racist, sexist or any other offensive remarks from members of the team, your people or their families.

For more information contact: West Berkshire Youth Offending Team, Merchant House, 14-20 Oxford Road, Newbury, Berkshire, RG14 1PA

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Merchant House, 14-20 Oxford Road, Newbury, Berkshire, RG14 1PA.

Telephone: 01635 553600 | E-mail: yot@westberks.gov.uk

www.westberks.gov.uk/yot
