



Children Act 1989

1989 CHAPTER 41

PART I

INTRODUCTORY

[^{F1}4A Acquisition of parental responsibility by step-parent

- (1) Where a child's parent ("parent A") who has parental responsibility for the child is married to [^{F2}, or a civil partner of,] a person who is not the child's parent ("the step-parent")—
 - (a) parent A or, if the other parent of the child also has parental responsibility for the child, both parents may by agreement with the step-parent provide for the step-parent to have parental responsibility for the child; or
 - (b) the court may, on the application of the step-parent, order that the step-parent shall have parental responsibility for the child.
- (2) An agreement under subsection (1)(a) is also a "parental responsibility agreement", and section 4(2) applies in relation to such agreements as it applies in relation to parental responsibility agreements under section 4.
- (3) A parental responsibility agreement under subsection (1)(a), or an order under subsection (1)(b), may only be brought to an end by an order of the court made on the application—
 - (a) of any person who has parental responsibility for the child; or
 - (b) with the leave of the court, of the child himself.
- (4) The court may only grant leave under subsection (3)(b) if it is satisfied that the child has sufficient understanding to make the proposed application.]

Textual Amendments

- F1** S. 4A inserted (30.12.2005) by 2002 c. 38, ss. 112, 148 (with Sch. 4 paras. 6-8); S.I. 2005/2213, art. 2(k)

Changes to legislation: Children Act 1989, Section 4A is up to date with all changes known to be in force on or before 19 April 2024. There are changes that may be brought into force at a future date. Changes that have been made appear in the content and are referenced with annotations. (See end of Document for details) [View outstanding changes](#)

F2 Words in s. 4A(1) inserted (30.12.2005) by [Civil Partnership Act 2004 \(c. 33\), s. 75\(2\)](#); S.I. [2005/3175, art. 2\(9\)](#)

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Changes and effects yet to be applied to the whole Act associated Parts and Chapters:

Whole provisions yet to be inserted into this Act (including any effects on those provisions):

- s. 4(1A)(aa) inserted by 2009 c. 24 Sch. 6 para. 21(3)
- s. 4(1C) inserted by 2009 c. 24 Sch. 6 para. 21(4)
- s. 4ZA(2)(aa) inserted by 2009 c. 24 Sch. 6 para. 22(3)
- s. 4ZA(3A) inserted by 2009 c. 24 Sch. 6 para. 22(4)
- s. 8(4)(k) inserted by 2021 c. 17 s. 52(1)
- s. 31A(4A) inserted by 2014 c. 6 s. 15(2)(b)