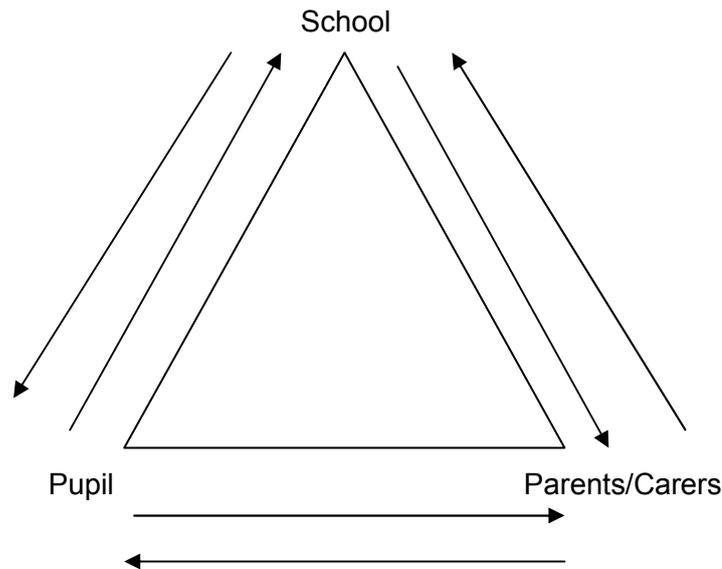


### Strengthening Partnerships Through Contracting

3-cornered contracting is a particular way of looking at how to create strong partnerships. Taken from Transactional Analysis, it emphasises the need to account for and check out the expectations of all parties involved in whatever work is being established. It also stresses how good contracting is regarded as a process rather than a one-off document.

In the contexts of school and home partnerships, the 3-sided contracting triangle can look something like this:



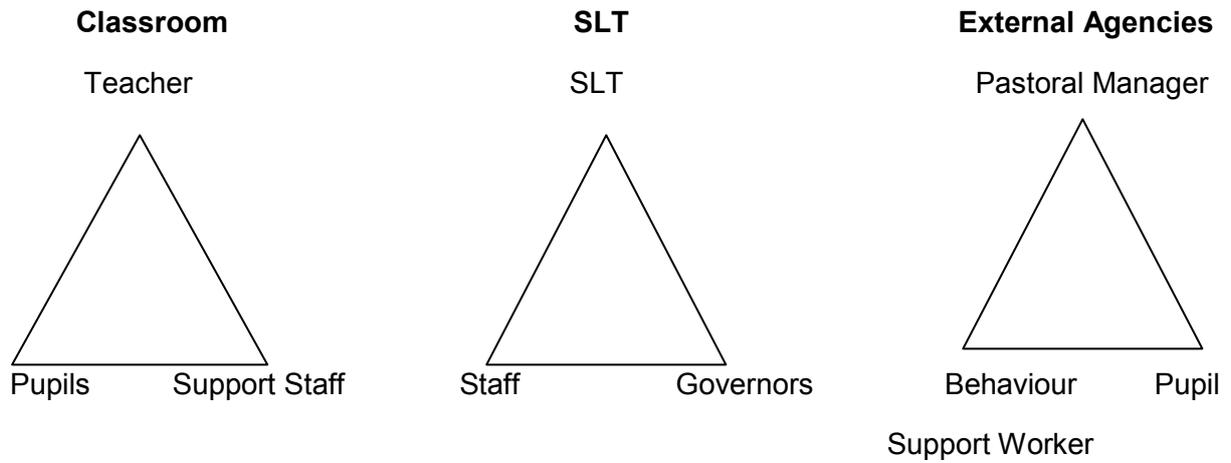
For each side of the triangle there are 2 vectors – these represent the flow of expectations. For example, down the left-hand side there will be expectations that the school has of the pupil (which presumably are not being met to some extent – hence the meeting about concerns) and also expectations that the pupil has of the school.

One of the keys to effective contracting is to give sufficient time to tease out what each party is expecting – and to check out how realistic these are. It's important to stress that contracting includes people saying 'No' if another party's expectations are unreasonable/unrealistic/inappropriate.

The following areas of questioning help to ensure that all key aspects of the contract have been checked out – and thus minimises the chances of the agreement/work breaking down:

- Why are we here? – what are the specific concerns? What do people hope to get from the meeting?
- How can we best work together towards our agreed goals?
- Who is going to do what in working towards these?
- What could jeopardise success? – however unwittingly, each party might sabotage the work. This is not to get into blaming people/highlighting deficiencies but rather to try to get out in the open from the outset possible barriers to success.
- And linked with this, how can we reduce the likelihood of this happening?

It is worth noting that contracting triangles can be applied to many other aspects of school life – EG:



For more information on Contracting, check out:

'Teaching and Learning' –

See also ['INSERT LINK TO CONTRACTING WITH PUPILS AND 'CLASSROOM CONTRACTING \(IN T & L AREA\)](#)