

Template Letter – Section 444 Education Act 1996

[Your Name]

[Your Address]

[City, Postcode]

[Email Address]

[Phone Number]

[Date]

Headteacher / Attendance Officer

[School Name]

[School Address]

[City, Postcode]

Re: Unauthorised Absence and Section 444 Education Act 1996

Dear [Headteacher's Name],

I am writing in response to the recent unauthorised absence mark/fine issued regarding my child, [Child's Name], who attends [School Name].

While I understand the importance of school attendance, I must highlight that my child has been absent due to issues relating to [mental health / SEND / anxiety / EHCP needs / etc.], which significantly impact their ability to attend school regularly.

Under Section 444 of the Education Act 1996, I wish to assert that I have a valid defence against any penalty or prosecution, as I am ensuring that my child is receiving education suitable to their age, ability, aptitude, and to any special educational needs they may have. Additionally, any absence has been due to unavoidable cause and circumstances beyond my control.

I have also made ongoing efforts to work with the school and relevant professionals to address and support my child's needs. These efforts include [briefly mention CAMHS involvement, EHCP application, educational psychologist input, etc.].

I therefore respectfully request that you review the attendance record and ensure the absence is recorded appropriately in line with updated Department for Education guidance and the law.

Please confirm receipt of this letter and let me know if further evidence or documentation is required.

Yours sincerely,

[Your Name]