

Template letter for parents and carers

Kidscape is here to help children and families. The bullying related absence template is for parents and carers to adapt and share with a school/local authority if they are concerned about school absence due to bullying (e.g. if the bullying has impacted on their child's health)

Dear (name of Head Teacher)
(copy to Local Authority Education Entitlement/Inclusion/Welfare service)

As you are aware from my/our previous communications (insert details) my/our son/daughter (name) has been experiencing bullying since (date), see attached log sheet. I am writing to inform you that s/he is currently absent from school due to the impact of bullying on his/her health. S/he is displaying symptoms of anxiety/depression/other and we have visited/are due to visit our family doctor for their support and advice. I/We will ensure that you are sent any relevant documentation from our GP.

I am/We are aware that the Department for Education's document '**School Attendance**' states that absence due to physical or mental illness should be marked in the register using Code I and the guidance states:

"Schools should authorise absences due to illness unless they have genuine cause for concern about the veracity of an illness. If the authenticity of illness is in doubt, schools can request parents to provide medical evidence to support illness. Schools can record the absence as unauthorised if not satisfied of the authenticity of the illness but should advise parents of their intention. Schools are advised not to request medical evidence unnecessarily. Medical evidence can take the form of prescriptions, appointment cards, etc. rather than doctors' notes."

I am/We are also aware that Local Authorities have a statutory duty to make other arrangements to educate a child where there are reasons for them not being in school full time. **Section 19 of the Education Act 1996** says that if a child of compulsory school age cannot attend school for reasons of illness, exclusion from school or otherwise, after 15 days, the Local Authority must make arrangements to provide 'suitable education' either at school or elsewhere.

Please could you assist me/us in locating the relevant local policies detailing education for children who cannot attend school for medical reasons or otherwise.

I/We would very much like to arrange a meeting with school and a Local Authority representative to discuss my/our child's absence. I/We would like to agree an action plan so that the correct support can be put in place to protect my/our child from harm and help him/her to return to regular and consistent education, whether in your school or otherwise.

Yours sincerely,