MANOR PARK CE (VC) FIRST SCHOOL & PRE-SCHOOL

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Inspiring all to learn and grow

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Dear Parents and Carers

Information for all parents and carers on the importance of attendance and the attendance process.

Manor Park CE First School/Dorchester Area Schools Partnership (DASP) is pleased to be able to provide some detail about our expectations for pupil attendance for the forthcoming academic year. Clearly, both families and schools are operating in challenging circumstances at present. We understand that you may have concerns for your child's well-being and this may influence your decision for your child's return to school. We urge you to talk to and work with us if this is the case so that we are able to work together to ensure that your child enjoys full attendance and participation in school and that you are able to be reassured for their well-being.

Manor Park CE First School/Dorchester Area Schools Partnership (DASP) will remain committed to ensuring the best for all our learners and are working together with parents and carers to support children and families as schools return widely in September. All schools are working hard to promote good attendance and have common systems in place to work with families when attendance drops below an acceptable level.

You will be aware of the importance of good school attendance in improving a young person's chance of success in life and establishing positive attitudes to life-long learning. There is clear evidence of the link between poor attendance at school and low levels of achievement. Of pupils who have less than 90% attendance, only 35% achieve five or more GCSEs at Grade 9 to 4 including Maths and English, but 73% of pupils who have attendance of 95% or more will achieve this.

If a child has an attendance level of 90% they will have missed one day a fortnight in school. Over a school year this will represent four weeks of absence. If this level of absence were maintained for a five year period it would mean half a school year would have been missed.

If Manor Park CE First School/DASP are concerned about a child's attendance they will talk to the parents and write to them to explain their concerns. The school will then monitor the child's attendance expecting to see an improvement. The Dorset Council (DC) School Attendance Service will be made aware of the school's concerns. If no improvement is made, the family will be invited to attend an Attendance Panel.

Here at Manor Park CE First School/DASP we are determined to ensure that all our students have the opportunity to achieve success and have an excellent record of attendance. Where there is cause for concern you will be contacted and attendance closely monitored. If attendance does not improve sufficiently, you will be invited to an Attendance Panel. This meeting is an opportunity for the school, family and a representative from DC' s School Attendance Service to meet together to discuss why your child has such a high absence rate and seek solutions to any problems.

The Panel can recommend several outcomes, which can include; a further period of close monitoring with specified targets for attendance; issuing a £60 Penalty Notice, a Parenting Order or seeking prosecution which could result in a fine of up to £1,000.

The attendance process is designed to identify poor attendees quickly and address the issues that are affecting their attendance. When attendance improves, monitoring will continue and, if it falls, the Attendance Process will be resumed. Please be assured that whilst we will be sympathetic with families with genuine concerns over Covid – 19 it is expected that all children should regularly attend school.

All schools hope that the Attendance Panel will not be needed and that all pupils will have a good record of attendance, are happy and successful and benefit from their time in school.

Yours sincerely

Mrs M Pallister
Headteacher