**Minutes**

**Multi-schools meeting – Braintree**

**Monday 16th November**

**Virtual meeting**

**In attendance**

Edith Borthwick

John Ray

Wethersfield

Great Easton

John Bunyan

Holy Family

Parent Governor

ECC SEND team

ECC employment team

Braintree council

**Apologies –** Notley green, Roseacres, St Andrews, St Francis, Lyons Hall Terling, White Notley, Beckers green, Birchanger

**Minutes**

We welcomed our Braintree group with opened arms (virtually), ready to hear from them for the first time this academic year. With other groups joining us too we went round for introductions and then got started. Firstly, we discussed Covid-19, what was hard for young people and what was helping them. This led to a range of views;

* Not being able to have friends round houses is difficult
* Not being able to see friends from other bubbles
* Schools staying open has been positive
* Eating lunch in classrooms or away from the busy school halls has helped some children
* Negative impact on our mental health
* Not being able to see younger siblings at school or being able to visit elderly family outside of school is hard
* Not doing as many school trips
* Being able to spend more time with some families has been good
* Rules don’t always make sense – see friends in school but not allowed outside of school?

We hope these comments will make support groups and schools look at the best possible support but also consider some of the changes stay if they are having a positive impact.

I passed the meeting over the Essex Employment team who led a presentation. They were asking the children what were their dream jobs and what were their most common hobbies. For the jobs section we heard about hairdressing, being a vet, a fashion designer, painting/decorating, rapper/DJ, a singer, a doctor or an illustrator. The hobbies list included going on games, YouTube, sports, exercise, art, spending time with pets and music. It is important for children to look at how their hobbies can link to their future job opportunities and with this group their was a wide range of creative jobs/hobbies that will be followed up by the employment team and will help them do some local research into what is out there. This will be followed up at some point. We thanked the team for their presentation and then headed for a break.

Our normal breaks would usually include drinks and biscuits for everyone in a big hall but right now schools must do their own thing. A quick turnaround led us onto discussing what are the most important topics for children right now. This feedback will help populate our voting list for next term;

* Family
* Animals
* Hypermobility
* Plastic in the sea/Global warming
* Autism awareness
* Using technology
* Getting outside and exercising

Mental health will remain on the agenda for the multi-schools as children continue to remind us how important it is right now to raise awareness.

The Essex SEND team then led a presentation all about the POET project. The group were asked to think about what support they had in school/community and what they would like to see more of. Currently, the group listed things such as termly reviews with teachers & parents, school councils, peer to peer support, questionnaires, one plan meetings and specific support on things such as reading/spelling. Future ideas included worry boxes around schools, more peer to peer support, more support for mental health in schools using the staff in house so look at training them, have a head in each class who has regular meetings with the schools leadership team and more spaces in schools to go if they need support. The team are collecting these views a wider piece of Essex work but we will also be getting schools to reflect on what they already have in place.

We just managed to squeeze in our final point of the day about our proposed school awards event that will look to reward children and schools for getting involved with us. We want the children to decide what categories we should be giving awards in ready for the summer term. Ideas included a kindness, endeavour, including people in sport, using the correct equipment to support different needs and a mental health awareness award. Schools must be involved throughout the academic year to stand a chance of being included in this special event.

We finished by picking our star of the meeting who was Ella from John Ray for some excellent contributions throughout, especially about hypermobility. In this meeting we were also joined by our head girl Caitlin from Edith Borthwick. As Caitlin quite rightly pointed out her role has been very difficult due to Covid-19. Caitlin made such a brilliant contribution throughout the meeting that we will be keeping her as our head girl for Braintree into the next round (2020 -2021). Well done Ella, Caitlin and everyone else who joined us!

Next meeting – Monday 8th March (Virtual)

**Follow up points**

* **It was a challenge to hear everyone due to it being virtual – please email over any follow up points by December 2020.**
* **How do you share this with the rest of your school – let us know!?**
* **Can you put in place any of the support ideas from the POET discussion?**