**Minutes**

**Multi-schools meeting – Colchester**

**Tuesday 9th November 2020**

**Virtual meeting**

**In attendance**

Doucecroft

St James’s

St Michaels

Little Garth

St Thomas Mores

Lawford

St Johns

Dedham

ECC SEND team

ECC employment team

Colchester district council

**Apologies –** Gosbecks, Stanway fiveways, Monckwick Junior, St Johns Green, Mersea Island, Heathlands

**Minutes**

Following hot on the heels of the children from Tendring the day before our Colchester group was in fine form! Everyone who was expected arrived on time with only a few minor issues with sound and pictures. Introductions worked well and we got going!

Our first point was to discuss the impact of Covid-19. We asked what was difficult but also to share anything positive they had found. We heard about children missing out on sport opportunities, not being able to hug each other, not seeing all their friends, lack of trips or holidays, hard wearing masks and seeing so many other people wear masks and how it’s hard to social distance in school. Some of the more positive comments were about actually getting on better with some friends and siblings and having a better understanding on general health and hygiene. It’s important we continue to ask the children their views on an issue that affects us all.

It was then the Essex employments presentation. They spoke about wanting to increase employment awareness in schools and asked the children to list their most popular jobs. These included things such as;

* Being in the police
* Working with animals
* Working in sports
* A marine biologist (which interestingly came up a few times in Tendring too!)
* YouTuber
* Teacher

Dedham school really made a positive comment about a lot of jobs people are focused on right now are those that help people. The employment team then explained how our hobbies are important as they can link to the jobs we want, and we also learn skills within these hobbies. The top hobbies amongst the group were things such as playing sport, art, reading, movie making, music and building things. The feedback will help influence future work within the council. After some good initial feedback, it was time to stop for a break.

After the break the group discussed the topics that are most important to them right now. This is so we can decide on our 3 key priorities from 2021, just like we did in 2019. The list included;

* The virus and getting back to normal
* Playing more sport
* Keeping healthy
* Using technology
* Never giving up and giving things a go

Some key topics there which will help towards that vote during March.

I then passed over to Clare who spoke to the group about the POET survey. Two key questions were asked, firstly about what being independent in their local community meant to them. This gathered feedback such as being able to make your own choices, being yourself, being able to visit other schools, working together with others and using local shops. Secondly, Clare asked what the children would like schools to do more to encourage involvement in the community building on the shop’s idea. This included things such as doing more fundraising to help the homeless and food banks, getting local people in for visits, working on the environment and supporting care homes was a popular one right now. Lot’s of useful feedback for the Essex SEND team who will be using this moving forward.

As we prioritised our agenda our final point was to come up with names for the new mental health service working in schools. Each school came up with a name which were things like, Feel good, listening ears, happy team, MH team, Happy health and communication crew. Words and ideas that appear more than once will be taken forward and discussed at a meeting next week.

In attendance we had our head girl for Colchester, Jess from Lawford primary, we thanked her for her hard work in the role before we look to appoint a new head girl in 2021. Our star of this meeting was James from Doucecroft school who has won it before but was enthusiastic and happy to share his ideas and listen to others it really did inspire us all.

Next meeting – Wednesday 3rd March 2021 (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!?**