**Minutes**

**Multi-schools meeting – Harlow**

**Tuesday 24th November**

**Virtual meeting**

**In attendance**

Pear Tree Mead

Harewood

Harlow Fields

Harlow College

St Lukes

St Albans

Ivy Chimneys

Oakview

ECC SEND team

ECC employment team

**Apologies –** Cooks Spinney (sent notes), Churchgate, Harlowbury, Holy Cross, Alderton, Purford Green, Burnt Mill, Passmores

**Minutes**

One of our best turn outs across Essex for this one, even with schools sending over notes due to technical issues. After introductions we discussed the impact of Covid-19. The children spoke about things that were going well but also things that were difficult; It has been hard not seeing all friends and family, some children are feeling very sad/depressed, we feel less cramped on the playground which is good, people not following the rules makes us mad, not having friends over for sleepovers, it’s been good to still go school and keep a daily routine but for other children they see it as a real risk coming to school, we can’t do usual activities like going to the park or visiting the local community on trips but another positive has been the impact on the earth/less pollution and that everyone is keeping more clean! A real range of thoughts here and a very good insight into how it is for many children – each person will have their own experience!

Secondly, I passed over to the Essex employment team. They wanted to find out what dream jobs children may have;

* Cat/dog handlers
* Vet
* Lawyer
* Working in a games shop
* Working in a laboratory
* Photographer
* Gaming
* Working with technology
* A music linked job
* YouTuber
* Zookeeper
* Police officer

Again, we have some real stand out themes across Essex, especially working with animals, using technology, being creative and helping others. The group were also asked about their top hobbies and most popular ideas included playing sport, playing musical instruments, playing video games, doing arts/crafts, cooking and spending time with animals. It’s important learn how these hobbies can link to future job opportunities. We then stopped for a break!

After our break we battled against some more technical issues but asked the group what the most important things to them are right now. This question was asked so that we can populate our priority list moving forward from 2021. Priorities were things such as mental health (which will be staying on our agenda!), using technology, family, keeping education going and transitions from school into college or college into the world!

I then passed over to the Essex SEND team to speak about POET. From this group they wanted to hear about the current support in place in their own schools. Lot’s was discussed; learning mentors in school, councillors in school, good offer of clubs, safe places to go, doing life skill activities, assemblies, including parents in discussions, one plan meetings, equal opportunities given, music therapy and having access to the internet. Ideas for further support included; information on how to pay bills, advice on how to drive a car and the process, more transition support, peer to peer support rather than having to speak to adults, having the autonomy to chose when we seek support and having more spaces to calm down and reaching out to local MP’s by writing letters. The Essex team will be looking at this, but we also hope schools may pick up ideas from this!

We just had enough time at the end for each school that was left to think about our end of year awards. We wanted ideas on categories for the awards that we plan to give out to those schools most active within the MSC network;

* Schools that best support mental health
* A helping the local community award
* Best staff support
* A perseverance/working hard award

Earlier in our round of meetings a child said we must ensure we have trophies for the event, but another child said we should also provide sweets/chocolate for the awards! A great meeting with many brilliant ideas but our star of the meeting went to Riley from Pear Tree Mead for great ideas throughout especially when talking about the POET survey and recognising the importance of mental health awareness!

Next meeting – Wednesday 17th 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?**