**Minutes**

**Multi-schools meeting - Tendring**

**Monday 09th November 2020**

**Virtual meeting**

**In attendance**

Holland Park

St Joseph’s

Holland Haven

Market Field

Alsford

Millfield’s

ECC SEND team

Sussex education team

ECC employment team

Tendring district council

**Apologies –** Two village primary, Shorefields, Harwich Primary, Broomgrove, Cann Hall, Brightlingsea, Tendring primary

**Minutes**

Our first ever full-scale virtual Essex meeting was met with challenges due to technology and getting everyone signed on. Unfortunately, there were several schools unable to join due to different problems which is understandable right now. HOWEVER, everyone who joined us was brilliant!

After e-introductions it was time for the first agenda point. The whole reason we are forced to hold these meetings virtually is Covid-19. We asked the group to think about how this was affecting them right now, what support was going well but also what was most difficult for them and their friends;

* No opportunity to meet in bigger groups
* Missing parks and play opportunities
* Staying 2 meters apart is a challenge in school
* Children worrying about death – family members
* Not being able to see all their friends
* No being able to have a hug
* Schools should not even be open
* ‘It feels like we are being locked in a cage’
* A positive is the impact it’s had on the environment around the world
* Lack of club opportunities in school – could schools be more creative with this?

Minutes will be circulated and, on our website, to help schools look at what they are currently doing and could they do more of possibly.

Next, I passed over to the Essex employment team who asked the group some questions about their current employment ideas. There was a range of jobs listed but the most common included artists, musicians, marine biologists, social work, gaming, working with animals and jobs involving sport. The employment team then explained how it’s important to link our hobbies and interests to the skills we might develop towards these jobs. The children then listed their most popular hobbies which again included things such as sports, music, spending time with animals and gaming. Some common themes here and the employment team will be working with schools to look at how their curriculum supports some of these ideas. Some of the children made a good point that children are having to adapt right now as many of their normal hobbies have stopped or have been changed because of covid-19, many are learning new skills in ICT.

After some good early conversation, it was time to give everyone a break to stretch, get some fresh air and move away from the screen (in normal times we would all be together sharing the biscuits!). On returning from their breaks we asked the group to think about what’s important to them right now, what are the key issues that they are their friends talk about. The first thing that came up was Covid-19 and finding a vaccine but this followed up by ideas such as friendships, looking out for each other, keeping safe, keeping fit, looking after animals, mental health, family, the environment, gaming, loosing family members, and loosing jobs. These ideas will help populate a list of important subjects that each area will vote on at the next set of meetings.

I then handed the meeting over to the Essex SEND team who are leading the POET project. Information on this was sent out prior to the meeting and the team gave us a re-cap. The children then discussed how their school currently collects views from their pupils. We got back some really good ideas which included buddy groups, suggestion boxes in schools, children joining one-plan meetings, specific feedback at breaktimes, school councils, pupil passports, anonymous surveys and goal setting at the start of the year. Some of these ideas were suggestions rather than things they are doing, and we will be looking at how these are followed up at the next round of meetings.

As we were pushed for time and we are still finding our feet with this virtual way of communicating we finished by giving the children a special task. The charity MIND has asked the North Essex groups to name their new service which is supporting children in schools. The names they came up with were;

* The mental health comforters
* Hope and kindness team
* MIND readers
* Child services
* Essex county mental health in school

These ideas, including ideas from the next two meetings will be taken back to the charity next week. Common words and themes will be discussed such as the children were happy to use the term mental health in this group.

We finished in the same way we always do by picking a star of the meeting. The star this time went to Daisy from Holland Haven who not only gave some important points on Covid-19 but also encouraged others around her to share their views!

Next meeting – Monday 1st 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.**
* **Look at the POET suggestion feedback – can you action any of these recommendations?**
* **How do you share this with the rest of your school – let us know!?**