**Minutes**

**Multi-schools meeting – Colchester**

**Tuesday 28th June 2022**

**Virtual**

**In attendance**

St James’s

Colchester Borough Council x2

ECC Social Care x2

**Apologies –** St peters, St Josephs, Langenhoe, St John’s, Dedham primary, Mersea, Little Garth, Bishops William Ward

**Minutes**

So like some of the other areas in Essex, it was harder to get schools together time term although we still loved chatting to St James’s and heard all about the ideas we had. The professionals who joined us also loved listening.

The meeting started with a discussion on school attendance and ideas that might be able to help. These ideas included;

* More quiet rooms in schools
* Mindfulness areas
* More calm activities
* An exciting activity in the morning to get involved in
* Having someone available who they can chat with
* More achievable learning
* More time given to recognise the surroundings

The group also spoke about some of the reasons they felt children were not attending school which also included anxiety about coming in, too many people, feeling out of control, work was too hard, friends being unkind and that lockdown had made it harder to return because some children were used to staying at home.

We then moved on to discuss animal cruelty. The group would like to see a big race or walk where people dress up as animals, use social media to spread the messages, donate money to charities that children want to use, ensure we use some of our learning from the green day such as planting trees and litter picking. The group were very enthusiastic about getting involved.

No break was needed with such a small group so we then spoke about how we could hear from more young people, separate to these meetings and especially if there were not in school. The group would like baskets in class where their ideas can be placed, have a ‘home school multi-schools council’ and type up ideas and send them in. The group found this question harder, but it is something we will look at from September.

The final discussion was about gender diversity and the group were really in deep conversation about this. They would like to see sports being based more on ability not gender, pictures on social media of children wearing different colours, more inclusive opportunities in schools generally and more mixed teams in schools too. Ideas will form part of the wider work we will be doing. All those at St James’s were excellent in listening and responding to the questions which is why we made St James’s school the star of this meeting! We hope to increase numbers once again moving into the new academic year.

Next meeting – Wednesday 9th November, 10am – 11:30am, Venue TBC, if you would like to host please let us know ASAP.

**Follow up points**

* Could you action any of the improving attendance ideas and then tell us about the impact of this?
* Can you share any good practice with us on educating about animal cruelty?
* Can you put in place any of the hearing from children’s ideas?