**Minutes**

**Multi-schools meeting – MID Secondary**

**Wednesday 15th June 2022**

**Chelmer Valley**

**In attendance**

Chelmer Valley

Beaulieu Park

Essex Virtual Schools

**Apologies –** Essex police, The Plume

**Minutes**

In what was an underrepresented meeting compared to other parts of Essex, the group certainly made up for this with their detailed views. The group wasted no time in getting going with their ideas as we started with talking about school attendance. The group had some strong views on how to improve this issue such as more opportunities to work with positive staff members, better relationships with staff, more meet the teacher meetings before going into their lessons, clearer rules on uniform policies, more tailored lessons, chill rooms available, more general support for different concerns, later start times, more flexibility on homework (popular), look at what is happening with sleep deprivation, less expectations, more support for exam stress, spread end of year tests out a little, have support places during break/lunch times, more preparation for tests, deal with bullying better, more pastoral support, more support with friendships, more lessons on acceptable relationships and boundaries, animal therapy for secondary not just primary, more you said we did way of working. It was interesting to hear such strong views especially around exam stress and sleep deprivation which has put these issues on our radar moving forwards.

Our second point of the day was to focus on animal cruelty, the key topic for this term. To help tackle this issue the children would like to see;

* More awareness on the curriculum
* Guest speakers coming into schools
* A fundraiser week
* Links to climate change
* Posters designed
* Better awareness about certain dog breeds and challenging misconceptions
* Bring your pets to school – part of the week on awareness
* Have more therapy dogs come in to schools
* More general adverting on the issue
* Lessons on how to deal with wild animals
* Talk about it a lot more – share good practice, Chelmer Valley have done some good work
* Ensure animals are involved in the next Braxted Park event

The group made some sensible suggestions which will be carried forwards. We then stopped for a comfort break!

After our quick break (because the group were full of ideas!) we went to talk about how more young people could have their voices heard even if the don’t attend meetings like this. The group spoke about having ballot boxes in schools for votes, more debates in schools, students leading assemblies, have conversations with people closer to our age (popular), upskill more young people in communication skills, newsletters, change the culture of snitching, jars where you can put thoughts, hubs in schools to talk, monthly surveys, an adult in school who’s role is to just listen. Many personal stories were shared and we must act on making sure more young people feel confident enough to speak out and remind them it’s a good thing to speak out.

As we had so many ideas on these points, we didn’t get a chance to discuss our last item on gender diversity. However, the group were so enthusiastic they left us some notes;

* Girls and boys have separate PE lessons – we need to change this
* Have a focus on language
* Lessons on the subject
* Banning certain phrases such as ‘that’s gay’ or ‘your just confused’
* Stricter consequences

Many personal issues discussed during this meeting too. Our star for this meeting was Holly for Beaulieu Park for her contributions especially within the first part of the meeting.

Next meeting –Friday 25th November 2022, 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 ideas?**