**Minutes**

**Multi-schools meeting – WEST ESSEX**

**Pear Tree Mead**

**Wednesday 16th November 2022**

**In attendance**

Pear Tree Mead

Morton Primary

Epping forest borough council

ECC Virtual schools

**Apologies –** Ivy Chimneys (Attending virtual), Churchgate, Nightgale, Cooks Spinney (Attending virtual), Harlow College

**Minutes**

A smaller meeting than we have become used to in WEST Essex but nevertheless some great ideas and great input from everyone involved. It was great to see Morton primary school as they won our summer competition with their great anti-racism poster which is going into lots of our schools!

We started our meeting with some introductions and moved straight onto the issue of bullying as we know from our attendance report that this is still a big issue for some young people. The group would like to see more kindness, better advertising about the issue, more assemblies in schools, more lessons on anti-bullying and books in classes where people can report their issues. This will form part of our campaign moving forwards.

Next up was a discussion on deaf awareness which included what would young people like to find out but also what we could do as a big group to raise awareness:

* We should learn sign language in schools (Popular)
* There should be sign language taught along singing in schools
* How does it affect you?
* What is different for you?
* Is it complete silence or can you hear different things?
* How do hearing aids help you?
* We should have a different difference that we focus on each week in all our schools

Some interesting ideas here. This will form part of our work in the new year and we also have some deaf awareness ambassadors to back this up!

Before our break we focused on one more area – money. We wanted to hear from young people about their views on the cost-of-living crisis;

* Will it affect us as we get older?
* What happens if we can’t get a job?
* Worried about not getting paid on time
* We should give out more laptops to people
* Schools could help with hot meals (popular)
* We don’t know what options to pick in school because we don’t talk about it earlier enough
* We can be forced into jobs that we don’t like

We had council reps within the meeting, and we will be using this feedback with other connected groups. We stopped here for a break and because some schools couldn’t make it there was more biscuits for everyone! Even in a smaller group it was great to see the different groups chatting to each other though and comparing their schools!

Two more points to cover and we started with a question from the Essex virtual schools. They asked what would help young people with moving on and ideas included having a buddy system, making sensory boxes more available to people, go to see classes a little earlier for better preparation and make sure each school has a special room or a sensory space, including secondary schools! The feedback will eb taken forward by the virtual school’s team!

Lastly, we discussed mascot ideas. During 2023 we want to launch a mascot and we asked the group what would make a good multi-school’s mascot? Here are some suggestions:

* Make it a superhero
* Have a mix of animals (Popular)
* A fish
* A frog
* A pigeon
* A Swan
* A brown bear
* Make sure it’s fluffy
* A figure that includes different colours and different emotions (Popular)
* We need to represent different differences
* Use puzzle pieces
* A cow because they are all different sizes

Lots of excellent suggestions and we will be taking these to our ambassadors in January!

We really appreciated Pear Tree Mead hosting this one and we are excited about the development of our WEST group. Our star for this meeting was the brilliant Paige from Pear Tree Mead for the way she listened to others and contributed throughout the whole meeting!

Next meeting – **Thursday 23rd February, 10am – 11:30am, Churchgate primary**

**Follow up points**

• Can you/do you include some sign language in your school – tell us about it!

• How do you share these minutes with your school – tell us about it!