**Minutes**

**Multi-schools meeting – MID Secondary**

**Beaulieu Park**

**Friday 25th November 2022**

**In attendance**

Alec Hunter

Beulieu Park

Chelmer Valley

ECC Director for education

ECC Virtual schools team

MSC Youth Worker

**Apologies –** Saffron Walden County High

**Minutes**

Some fantastic input from those in attendance at this meeting and on leaving the meeting I felt very inspired by what I heard. Once we got everyone in through the door and introduced, we started with a special message from our local director for education who was in attendance. Clare spoke about the importance of listening to young people and praised the attendance report which has come from this group. Their work will feed into the strategic level of helping keep young people in our Essex schools and Clare said ‘Your work is essential to what we need to listen to you more.

Our first agenda item was to focus on anti-bullying. This came out of our attendance report as the top issue on why come young people won’t come to school. Here were some ideas on how to combat this:

* We need to understand why people might bully
* Awareness needs to include parents
* Email communication for young people in schools which is anonymous
* We need to have more safe places in schools
* Use a red flag system so people who constantly bully are picked up
* Have a more person-centred approach when people report bullying
* As young people we need feedback once we have reported bullying
* We need to be able to speak to the adults we connect with as we all connect with different staff member
* We need to be careful about the word ‘banter’
* We need to work on getting rid of the word ‘snitch’
* We need to ensure young people don’t have a label that sticks with them when it comes to bullying
* Make sure we know what ‘awareness’ means

Some strong messages that we hope to link into any campaign work that we will be looking to start.

Next up was a discussion around deaf awareness and what young people would like to know but also how we can raise more awareness again. Ideas from the group included have more sign language lessons in school (popular), let’s slow down our pace when talking/teaching, write things down more in lessons, have a sponsored silence, start clubs in schools focusing on this, how do people get round the challenges, what kind of things might offend you, teachers should be trained (popular), we should have sign language symbols around all of our schools, every day we could have a sign of the day and the awareness should start in primary schools. The group would also like some future fundraising. Ideas will form part of our 2023 work in deaf units but also part of our work with our deaf awareness ambassadors. Break time arrived with a special treat as the school very kindly provided not only drinks and biscuits but also sausage rolls and pizza! This made people very happy, but it was great to also see so many people talking to each other during the breaktime too!

After our break it was time to discuss the cost-of-living crisis. More and more people are being affected by this and we need to ensure young people have a voice. They would like to see:

* Food banks being setup in schools (popular)
* Get young people talking about it more
* Reduce the cost of school trips – does it add value to our education? – Some people can’t afford this and is there further support for it?
* Do a shoebox appeal for those in poverty
* Spare food in schools – can we better use this?
* There will be an impact on Christmas – can we donate toys? (popular)
* Learn from what we do at harvest each year
* Better advice for young people on budgeting
* Free meals for everyone in primary schools
* Reassurance for young people that things will get better
* Website support for young people
* Make healthier food cheaper
* Make sure young people and their families know about food vouchers
* We have children in year 1 that are worried about money
* More mental health support
* Promoting happiness more in schools
* Use advert calendars to provide support for those in poverty
* Assemblies on how to get support

You can see by the range of ideas what a useful and engaging conversation it was and we will be encouraging teams to read these minutes.

As the last agenda item led to such a strong response, we only had time for one more item. The last discussion was all around what support young people would like with change and moving on. The ECC virtual schools were in attendance so they could also keep notes. In short, the young people would like more support provided through peers, better advice on careers for the future, be more realistic and less pressure on grade expectations, more opportunity to explore higher education, more work experience opportunities (popular), more support with CV’s, support on money management, have induction days led by other young people, have more interactive approaches in lessons, non-uniform when year 6’s come in to look so there is no rivalry between schools, advice on how to be more employable and more support with what to work on while we are at home. Lot’s of interesting feedback once again and the virtual schools will be looking to work with this.

This was our last in person meeting of the term and we were delighted by the application of everyone involved. Thanks again to Clare also for coming and speaking to the group directly. The star for this meeting was Annie who spoke well to the group and looked to involve others.

**Next Meeting –** Tuesday 7th March, 10:30am – 12pm, **Venue TBC – If you would like to host please let us know ASAP.**

**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!