

The Multi-Schools Council

Meeting Minutes

Thursday 14th January 2016

Doucecroft school

In Attendance

Market Field School
Doucecroft school
Fordham All Saints
The Gilberd
Rolph School
Columbus
Shorefields
Hazelmere
St Josephs
Active Essex
Project Ability
Wendy Smith

Minutes

Firstly a big thank-you to Doucecroft school for hosting the meeting. A big effort from all the staff but especially Toby who gave up his own time to dedicate ideas to the talent show and make sure the meeting had all that it needed! Toby had even written a poem which will be shared on the MSC website and got a great response from everyone in the room:

Autism is a gift.

I hope me and other people with autism all have the same privileges and pleasures to roam this earth and have the same rights as everyone else.

Please show, patience and understanding, because we are all the same inside.

Autism rules!

Toby – Doucecroft School

The meeting started with our head boy/girl speeches. Olivia Brown from St Joseph's went first and was very modest about how she would help support all peoples ideas and that her listening skills would help everyone to be heard. Next up we had Tom from Market Field School who stood in for Joseph Franklin who could not join us today. Tom spoke about Joseph's experience of being in different special schools which would help him with a range of people. Tom showed great bravery to read on Joseph's behalf and the whole council agreed Joseph and Olivia deserved the role of head boy/girl. This will take place with immediate effect.

Moving on from the fantastic speeches we discussed the council's plan to hold a talent show this academic year, to raise funds for the council. The council discussed ideas on how we will get people involved, what might happen at the show and how we can look after those who come along. The children came up with a range of ideas and it

was suggested that schools who wish to enter have their own talent shows in preparation for the real thing. The children also spoke about the need to make sure we had the correct facilities and the plan is for Doucecroft school to use their contacts at Colchester United football ground. By the next meeting there will be a draft plan and a date and venue set for the talent show, this is an exciting event for the council and one that Toby has put a lot of work into.

After that we discussed what role we would like our Ambassador Wendy Smith to play in the future of the MSC. Ideas included:

- Head Judge at talent show
- Support with all future events
- Use her contacts to support the council
- Help raise funding
- Link websites

I will discuss these ideas with Wendy and we will be getting on with it! Wendy is very proactive in what she does and uses the line 'If you don't ask, you don't get!'

There was a brief update on the tea party plans. The plans are in place ready for the tea party however the company who were funding this event have had some financial difficulties and are unable to support us currently. As part of her role Wendy will be chasing up leads in regards to this event and we will get them – eventually!

The council then had the chance to look at who would be supporting what at this year's SSG. We currently are up on attendance from last year's event but have the desire to get more schools involved. Information on who is supporting what will follow before the next meeting.

Our final discussion point was on the running of future events. As well as involving our head boy/girl in the meetings the council would also like to have 1 spoke's person, each agenda point, to give the ideas of the whole group. The council liked the idea of allowing schools to present their ideas in their own individual way, if that be by speaking, writing or drawing. These ideas will be taken forward with immediate effect for the next meeting.

Dawn Catley from Active Essex spoke about her ideas towards linking more special schools and mainstream schools together, feeding on from the Play unified work that myself, Gary Smith and Brian Shaw have looked at. Gill Nelwyn from project ability is also supporting these plans and the council hopes to have sub groups across the Essex area mimicking the work that we are currently doing. The MSC will remain the leading council and has future plans to help co-ordinator out of county involvement. The young leaders training, in preparation for the SSG will be held at the Stanway federation centre, more information will follow.

Finally the council had the chance to mix with each other in a separate room accompanied by a lovely range of biscuits, drinks and cakes. The star pupil for this meeting actually went to 2 pupils for their speeches in regards to the head boy/girl role – well done Olivia and Tom.

Next meeting – Friday 29th April, The Gilbert School, Colchester.