



**Elm Park School**  
Empowers all learners to achieve their personal best

7 August 2019

## **Letter of Support for the Cool Schools Peer Mediation Programme**

### **To Whom It May Concern,**

My name is Jamie Kim, and I have been the Cool Schools Coordinator at Elm Park School since the beginning of 2018.

The Cool Schools Programme has been an integral part of Elm Park School for many years, and has had a profound and positive impact on our school culture. Our staff have regularly participated in Cool Schools workshops and training sessions, and use these principles in their classroom programmes from Year 0 to 6.

Being a Peer Mediator is a coveted role for students at Elm Park School. Our students apply for the position, are then considered carefully by classroom teachers and then myself. It is always saddening to have to still turn down so many students after this process for the sake of having manageable numbers, and due to limited funding, time and resources. After this, our students go through a rigorous training programme to become qualified Peer Mediators. This means they are able to support staff at break times by dealing with mild to moderate issues that occur in the playground.

As students can go to their peers to resolve issues before they escalate, the Cool Schools programme is extremely empowering. The younger students look up to the Peer Mediators. For those students who are still learning to approach an adult for help in the playground, Peer Mediators ensure they will not be left behind, and model to them problem-solving skills.

Quotes from the 2019 EPS Peer Mediators:

*It's fun to help the juniors with their problems.*

*We are restoring faith in friendships and happiness at our school.*

*I like seeing the smiles on my peers' faces when they feel better about the problem.*

*I like helping friendship problems because the kids think they aren't going to be able to be friends again.*

*I really like helping people find someone when they don't have anyone to play with.*

*Being a Peer Mediator is helpful because we share a kid's point of view about a problem.*

In my opinion Cool Schools is a fantastic programme which provides a vital skill set for the whole school community. Responding to conflict and resolving issues positively and calmly is a vital life-skill that needs to be taught while children are young. Furthermore, as many East Auckland schools implement this programme, introducing these skills early at primary school allows the opportunity to build on them through intermediate and college.

Yours sincerely

Jamie Kim  
Y3 Team Leader  
Cool Schools Coordinator



Wednesday 14 August, 2019

Christina Barruel  
Level 2, 78 Pitt Street  
Auckland 1010  
New Zealand

Dear Christina,

### **Letter of Support for Ongoing Funding for the Peace Foundation Programmes**

My name is Emma Davis and this year I have introduced peer mediation and the Cool Schools programme to Taupaki School.

Prior to this, I was working as a teacher and Cool Schools Coordinator at Upper Harbour Primary School. We delivered the programme every other year to the whole school and successfully ran peer mediation in the playground for over 5 years. As a school we observed that the whole culture changed. Children were using the language of conflict resolution in and outside the classroom. Families contacted us to say that the children were using the conflict resolution skills in the family home. The peer mediators felt empowered and were able to demonstrate their leadership skills by running peace events and thinking of ways to make the school a more peaceful place. At an individual level I witnessed children with behaviour problems stepping up and becoming positive role models. This wouldn't have been possible without the resources and training received from the Peace Foundation.

I have been excited to introduce the Cool Schools programme to Taupaki School. The teachers thoroughly enjoyed the conflict resolution training and have told me the children from years 0-8 were enthusiastic about the lessons. What is particularly fantastic about the programme is that it can be adapted to suit any year group. The school peer mediators love feeling like they are leaders and making a difference in their school and community.

#### **Quotes from peer mediators:**

*"I think peer mediation is a good thing because it teaches people how to sort out arguments and problems. We are already having less problems to sort out in the school."*

*"I like being a peer mediator because I get to help people sort out their problems and I help to make them happy. I have learnt to be a good listener and respect others."*

### Quotes from students:

*"I think peer mediation in our school is great because it makes our school a really lovely place. For example when we have tech students from other schools here they can see that we have peer mediators and they know they can get help if anybody is mean to them."*

In conclusion I believe that Cool Schools is an amazingly beneficial programme that helps adults and students alike. The programme, is empowering, develops leadership capabilities and teaches the values and skills we would like our children to grow up with. In a world where children are growing up with anxiety and lower self-worth, I can see that this programme truly helps children develop confidence and life-long skills.

Yours sincerely,



Emma Davis

Team Leader  
Peer Mediation Co-ordinator







## Contact Us

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/PapakuraNormal



Download the  
Skool Loop App  
for free

5 August 2019

To who it may concern,

### RE: Letter of Support/Recommendation for the Cool Schools Peer Mediation Programme

We are proudly a "Cool School"; the peer mediation programme fits in perfectly with our combined PB4L and Te Ara Whakamana: Mana Enhancement programmes.

I am pleased to say that implementing the Cool Schools Peer Mediation programme at Papakura Normal School has equipped our ākonga/learners with important life skills, including:

- leadership
- empathy
- problem-solving
- social skills
- communication
- tuakana-teina (*a vital Māori philosophy in a school that is almost 50% Māori*)

Younger ākonga/learners know that they can rely on the peer mediators for support and guidance when they are dealing with all sorts of problems, from teasing, to being left out, to false accusations and minor disagreements. The Peer Mediators know that their job is important in fostering peaceful relationships among ākonga/learners, by providing their peers the opportunities to come up with solutions to solving their own problems.

The Cool Schools Peer Mediation programme at Papakura Normal School can be easily linked to the Key competencies, as shown below:

1. **Participating and contributing** - Ākonga/learners show leadership, encouraging and listening to others and giving ideas on how to solve their problems;
2. **Relating to others** - Ākonga/learners give the chance for both disputants to share their point of view, encouraging cooperation of the mediation process, empathy and sympathy;
3. **Managing self** - Peer mediators have to be responsible when carrying out their duties, ākonga/learners are encouraged to be aware of their emotions and learn how to regulate these, analysing situations and responding accordingly;
4. **Thinking** - Ākonga/learners need to think critically about their actions and decide on logical solutions, ideally where both parties win. Ākonga/learners also need to think about how to handle their emotions and problems next time they are faced with similar situations, to avoid these problems repeating;
5. **Understanding language, symbols and text** - Peer Mediators are required to read body language when identifying ākonga/learners in the problem who might have problems, mediators and ākonga/learners also need to communicate effectively through listening and speaking.

The four underlying concepts of the Health and Physical Education curriculum can also be demonstrated through the Cool Schools Peer Mediation Programme at Papakura Normal School when children carry out their roles as Peer Mediators:

- **Hauora** - This is an important concept where all four dimensions of *Te Whare Tapa Wha* are enacted to encompass good health. Peer mediation focuses on areas that encourage mental and emotional well-being (*taha hinengaro*) and social well-being (*taha whānau*).
- **Attitudes and values** - Mediators are responsible citizens of our school who show care and concern for others. They have a sense of social justice and encourage others to have responsible attitudes too.

He waka eke noa • We are in this together



- **Socio-ecological perspective** - Mediators care about and foster good relationships between ākonga/learners and their peers.
- **Health promotion** - Peer Mediators help to develop a safe and positive environment at Papakura Normal School, and understand their role is important in achieving this.

As the relatively new principal at Papakura Normal School, I have spent my first two years at the school trying to “de-Europeanise” the school so that it becomes a culturally inclusive school that has its foundations in a uniquely New Zealand school where te ao Māori and British cultures are on an equal footing.

As such the school’s motto is now “He waka eka noa” and we work to teach our ākonga/learners that we all need to work together to make a success of our educational journey. The analogy is simple:

- the waka is our school, and
- those onboard are our ākonga/learners, teachers/kaiako and our whānau/families.

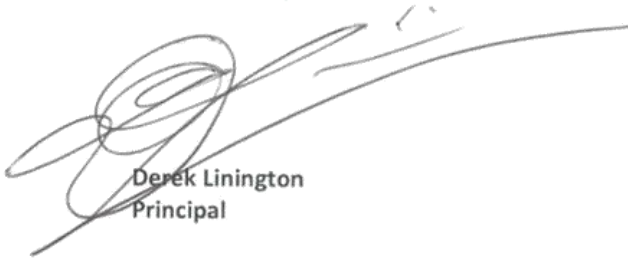
In order to propel our waka forward we need to paddle it, in our school scenario we use an OAR. Each person on the waka is expected use his or her oar in unison, co-operation effectively to ensure a speedy smooth path forward. It is a set of common values that bring people together and at Papakura Normal School the OAR forms our values; **O**thers, **A**chieve and **R**espect.

In today’s era children at school and increasingly those that joining us as 5-year olds lack resilience and find working in a school community very difficult. This programme helps to teach resiliency.

We, at Papakura Normal School, have found that the Cool Schools Peer Mediation programme not only underpins, but also supports us to achieve, our Papakura Normal School way.

I am only too happy to further elaborate on the content of this open letter of support should it be required, and I urge you to support the programme please.

Yours sincerely



Derek Linington  
Principal

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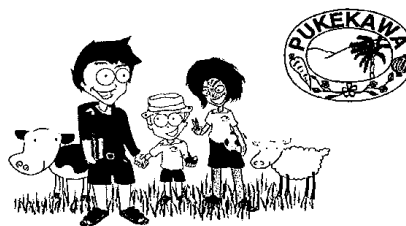
He waka eke noa • We are in this together



# PUKEKAWA SCHOOL

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12<sup>th</sup> August 2019

To Whom It May Concern

Re: Cool Schools

Pukekawa School has been a "Cool School" for several years. The staff, parents, students and I strongly support the Cool School Peer Mediation Programme.

The principles and strategies promoted play an integral part in our behaviour management system where students are taught how to, and encouraged to, make good choices about their behaviour and discuss these choices.

Students develop the ability to support each other, articulate their feelings and actions and think about possible solutions. It is all about student agency, being responsible for their choices and developing citizenship for the future.

Our Senior school students (year 5 & 6) are all trained to be mediators. They take a leading role in developing a harmonious culture at our school. The training techniques and apparel add that bit of extra "mana."

Making good choices, problem solving and supporting one another relates closely with our school values and the New Zealand Curriculum values and key competencies.

The Peace Foundation support with the training of teachers and student mediators. Being able to invite an external facilitator adds more depth and rigour to this process.

I feel the Cool School Mediation Programme and components of the programme related to peaceful choices and problem solving is very important and I would certainly endorse the continuation of "Cool Schools."

Karen McCulloch  
Principal Pukekawa School





12 August 2019

To whom it may concern

This is a short note to say thank you very much to the Peace Foundation for the work you have done recently at Ridgway School.

We believe that teaching children to resolve their disagreements in a peaceful way is an essential life skill and helps them to build resilience and a strong foundation for personal wellbeing. For this reason we have been operating our own version of Peer Mediation for a number of years. The resources provided by the Peace Foundation have been essential for staff training and helping children to learn.

As a PB4L school we've worked hard on building a culture where children treat each other respectfully and take responsibility for their own actions. Peer Mediation and explicit teaching of conflict resolution skills, along with Circle Time and a strong focus on positive behaviours are helping our children to reject bullying behaviours in both themselves and others, and maintain a friendly and happy school climate.

There seems to be an increasing incidence of childhood and parental anxiety across society and we notice this at Ridgway School too. We've looked for ways to build resilience in our children, and being able to resolve their own conflicts empowers them, and allows them to develop an inner strength to face up to daily challenges. Again the Peace Foundation resources are for us, integral to building resilience in our children.

After the recent Mosque shootings in Christchurch I've come to see that the work the Peace Foundation do in teaching children to resolve differences peacefully and develop empathy for others is now more important than ever before. I wish that there was greater funding available for more schools to access the resources that you provide. Without the support of trained facilitators and access to resources, it is very difficult for schools to meet the complex needs of our 21st Century learners. In an ideal world the Ministry of Education would be able to fully fund your work to provide schools with the resources to build resilience, empathy and respect for others.

Again, thank you to the Peace Foundation for working with us, and for the important work you do to make our world a better place.

Ngā mihi nui

Kathryn Smith



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14 August 2019

**Letter of Support for the Cool Schools Peer Mediation Programme**

**To Whom it May Concern,**

It is with great pleasure that I write this letter. Our school has been fortunate to have highly experienced facilitator, Christina Barruel, work with us throughout 2019.

Christina has come to work with our students and staff here at Pukeoware School, and also with a large number of our local schools, throughout this year. Christina has equipped us with how to teach conflict resolution skills within classroom programmes and also how to implement a Peer Mediation service within our playground.

In March, 55 of our Year 4 to Year 8 students opted to participate in a Peer Mediation training workshop facilitated by Christina, as part of our Cool School's revisit. We are a small school, so to have a large majority of our students want to participate was very encouraging. Christina was highly skilled in facilitating effective student engagement. Our students came away feeling motivated and inspired, and many went on to train for playground service.

As a result, we now have a committed and strong group of 30 Playground Peer Mediators, ranging from Year 4 through to Year 8. Christina's effective guidance has enabled us to implement a service within our school that empowers students to solve their own problems. This intentional pro-active strategy has been a key factor in the promotion of a positive and healthy school culture at Pukeoware School.

Our 30 students have turned up consistently to their weekly training and de-brief sessions and have remained committed to their rostered duty times. This is due in part to the Cool Schools support resources, which have been an invaluable for equipping our Peer Mediators with skills and for generating useful discussion. The Cool Schools Peer Mediation programme is impacting our students beyond our school environment. It is teaching our students life-long skills that will lead to healthier families and communities.

Recently, our Peer Mediators decided how they wanted to highlight Peace Week in our community. They went into the playground and looked for students showing peace. They took photographs of students showing our School Values of Aroha, Mana, Toa and Kaha in action. Our wider community was



encouraged to see that the Peer Mediators could confidently share their observations of positive interactions between our students, aged five to thirteen.

One of the most effective aspects of the Cool Schools Peer Mediation programme is that it is based on a school-wide approach. At Pukeoware School, our Peer Mediators feel empowered in that they are modelling this process in the playground. They are also a key resource for equipping students and teachers to learn important skills within classroom learning time, as they can be called upon to model the process to classes.

One extremely rewarding result has been to see individual students with challenging circumstances and behaviours embrace the programme and use the skills they have learnt to make more positive choices in their own lives.

As a team, our Service Peer Mediators know that they are making a positive difference at our school. We cannot thank the Peace Foundation and Christina Barruel enough for providing this programme. It has positively impacted our school community on many levels.

I recommend the Peer Mediation programme to other schools, without hesitation, whenever I get the opportunity because I know first-hand the positive impact it can have.



Yours sincerely

A handwritten signature in black ink, which appears to read 'Dianna Cotter'. The signature is fluid and cursive, with a long horizontal stroke extending to the right.

Dianna Cotter  
Cool Schools Coordinator  
Deputy Principal (Junior syndicate) / SENCO  
Pukeoware School

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10th August 2019

To Whom it May Concern,

We had the *Cool Schools Peer Mediation Programme* training in April this year with our whole staff. We were really impressed at how well the programme supported what we were already doing in our school (with senior children as peer mediators) and how well it fitted into our school values and culture.

The delivery of the PD on the day was excellent, with all staff being fully included and involved in role play and activities. There was lots of time for discussion and reflection on how best the programme would operate in our school.

Since the training day all teachers have taught (and continue to teach) Cool Schools lessons in their classrooms, and our Cool Schools Coordinator has begun training our mediators ready for their 'launch' next term.

All of the training, many resources and support that we have received, has enabled us to deliver an essential strand of the Health & Physical Education Curriculum; Building Relationships with People. I would highly recommend the Cools Schools Mediation Programme to other schools, as it helps teach essential skills that young people need for life.

Smiles,



Sonia Mudgway  
Principal



Wednesday 14 August, 2019

Christina Barruel  
Level 2, 78 Pitt Street  
Auckland 1010  
New Zealand

Dear Christina,

**Letter of Support for Ongoing Funding for the Peace Foundation Programmes**

The Peace Foundation, and the Cool Schools programme in particular have made a huge positive impact on our school.

Educators are pressured for time. Sometimes the massive impact of fighting fires and resolving conflict goes unnoticed as we stay responsive to the conflict, but distracted from the core work of teaching and learning and making real change. Without the tools for working at the grass-roots level to effect change, we are bound to the distraction, and overwhelmed by the work to reclaim our time and our community. The cool schools programme helps us do the work that makes lasting change.

Peace education and the Cool Schools programme brings a functional framework that helps teachers deliver on the key competencies each day, in a way that makes sense, applies to students real lives and leaves a lasting impression on our school. How do we teach managing self, or the skills of working others, especially when that becomes hard? The Peer Mediation programme teaches explicit skills that students can put into place themselves in or out of class, with a supportive community of learners who are all on the same journey.

As a whole school programme, we've involved our support and admin staff as well. Our experience is that peace education doesn't just bind curriculum delivery across all year levels, it also binds teachers and staff to the philosophy of conflict resolution and whole school change that helps everyone participate in reinforcing and supporting a more peaceful school, one student at a time.

The Cool Schools programme is exceptional not only because of the programme itself, but because of the people who run it. The ongoing support we've received from the Peace Foundation team has gone far beyond the peer mediation training. From leading staff wide conflict resolution to supporting our leaders with timely, personalised training sessions, the presence of the Peace Foundation staff has been incredibly responsive to our needs and context.

I hope that schools in New Zealand will always have the opportunity to work with the Peace Foundation team to build positive, confident students, and skilled resourced teachers.

Yours Sincerely,



Pete Hall  
Principal



1 August, 2019

To Whom It May Concern,

I am writing in support of the Peace Foundation's Cool Schools programme which our school is proudly a part of. All our staff have received training in implementing the programme in our school and all classrooms have learnt about the mediation process promoted by the Peace Foundation for our students who are Year 1 – 8.



With all staff and students knowing and using the mediation process across the school, there is a common language and philosophy across the school as to how to have conversations when we don't agree with each other.

- Ⓢ Teachers use mediation processes in the classroom in whole class situations and between small numbers of students who may be struggling to get on.
- Ⓢ We have trained Year 5 – 8 student Peer Mediators in the Playground who are available for students to approach with lower level conflicts at break times. For us this means that duty staff can monitor safety and wellness in our playground more effectively and students are also learning positive skills for life that enable them to deal effectively and respectfully with each other in solving conflicts between each other.

Our community consultation around our Charter identified a belief that teaching our students resilience and how to be positively, actively engaged, confident, happy and well members of their school, local and global community was important. Our school curriculum (based on NZC) utilises mediation skills, mindfulness and yoga to support students to achieve this community aspiration.

Aligned to the learning area of Health and PE and utilising our 5Cs (21<sup>st</sup> Century skills that relate to the Key Competencies), in particular Communication, Collaboration and Citizenship – there is a strong link to the New Zealand Curriculum for our students being involved in Peer Mediation with the Peace Foundation.



I believe this programme is an important resource for our school, as part of a suite of other learning, to meet our school and community aspirations for our students. Any support that the Peace Foundation might receive to continue to provide and enhance this resource for schools would be valuable.

Yours sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink that reads "Suzanne Billington". The signature is written in a cursive, flowing style. At the end of the signature, there is a small, simple smiley face drawn with two dots for eyes and a curved line for a mouth.

Suzanne Billington  
(Principal)