

TAUPO-NUI-A-TIA COLLEGE

PRINCIPAL: BEN CLAXTON BPE, MProfStuds.



25 January 2024

To Whom it may concern

Re - Letter of Support for the Peace Foundation - Leadership through Peer Mediation Programme (LtPM) and Communication Skills for Leadership (CS4L).

Taupo-nui-a-Tia College has had the benefit of support from Peace Education - Peace Foundation in the delivery of training and implementation of the programme Leadership through Peer Mediation since 2017 and this year the Communication Skills for Leadership Programme.

As a College we were looking at initiatives to best support student well-being - specifically supporting concepts of manaakitanga (care and concern), whanaungatanga (relationship), ako and mahi tahi (working together). A consistent approach to the development and implementation of this training at Nui over the past seven years has built a significant presence of student leaders in the College. These students promote fairness and respect for all members of the school community. The students role model being 'upstanders' watching out for harassment and bullying and help students to get the support they may need clearly effecting and benefitting the school culture of inclusivity and acceptance.

At Taupo-nui-a-Tia College we have found both programmes have been valuable in supporting the development of a School wide programme in Wellbeing. The students trained by the Peace Foundation in the LtPM and CS4L learn and develop skills which place them in the forefront of actively being able to promote student well-being. This together with the Colleges Cornerstone Values which underpin all our actions and ensures student voice is a powerful force in the ongoing development and systems response to well-being issues.

Yours faithfully

Hilary MacRae

Guidance Counsellor

BSocSc, GradDipT, GradDipCouns(Sup), MCouns(Hons). MNZAC



2 February 2024

To Whom It May Concern,

Mt Roskill Grammar School (MRGS) is a large multi-cultural school with 1800 students and over 70 diverse cultures. In 1994, it was the first Secondary school in New Zealand to establish a Peer Mediation Service in partnership with the Peace Foundation. This comprehensive service now has 200 trained Peer Mediators, with over 80 of them being advanced Mediators.

The role of the Peer Mediator is to support students to resolve conflict in a constructive way. They are Ambassadors of Social Justice, promoting the important qualities of kindness, fairness, and respect for all. They stand up against bullying behaviour and support students to get help when needed.

Every year the Peace Foundation provides the Leadership through Peer Mediation (LtPM) training at Mt Roskill Grammar for up to 100 new student Mediators and provides advanced training for a further 40 Mediators.

The Peace Foundation provides relevant, culturally responsive, engaging training activities and have created some unique resources that will be available next year.

In 2022, MRGS had the privilege to be involved in the making of the new Peace Foundation Mediation training video which will be used for the future training of Peer Mediators.

Research shows that the best way to tackle bullying in schools is to support students themselves to take the lead in this area. This student owned and student driven programme has shown to be effective in reducing bullying behaviour within the school.

The benefits of this LtPM training are multi-layered for MRGS. It is a major anti-violence programme that teaches young people positive conflict resolution skills as well as providing opportunities for feeling a sense of belonging and connection to one another. It is resilience-building as well as confidence-building for all students involved.

The LtPM programme is congruent and reinforcing of the all the values and key competencies of the NZ Curriculum. It fits especially with the key competencies of 'relating to others, managing self and participating and contributing.' It also supports all the values of diversity, 'equity community and participation, ecological sustainability, integrity and respect.'

Independent research on "Leadership Through Peer Mediation" by Dr Helene Connor & Leo Buccahan have found overwhelming positive effects of the programme on students, teachers, and school environments.

The research found that most of the respondents felt LtPM was of benefit to the culture of the school. LtPM was viewed as being helpful in improving relationships within the student population and appeared to reduce bullying, creating a safer environment.

Anecdotal evidence has shown that the life-long skills students learn through the LtPM training flow on to the Mt Roskill community to families and their future education and workplaces. I believe that this programme is a major intervention in achieving greater peace, well-being, and safety for the youth in our Puketapapa community.

The following are some examples of Mediator student voices:

- *"Being a mediator makes me feel like I am part of a huge family".*
- *"I have grown into a much more thoughtful person and can now relate and cope with everyday situations better. I believe I look out for the students more and can use my skills to help others. I can resolve my conflicts in a much more mature way. This process has helped me gain skills that I can use in the future and has given me skills to create better relationships with bosses, teachers, etc."*
- *"It has boosted my confidence about myself and has given me comfort that there are students who are willing to stop bullying. It has made me closer with my friends and now we can resolve our own problems without it getting out of hand".*
- *"I love getting together with people who are as passionate for peace as I am, and events such as peace week are so great to get involved in".*
- *"It has strengthened my sense of belonging to the school and I am now more committed to everything I undertake. It has motivated me to strive for excellence and have a positive attitude."*
- *"I am a changed person. I'm wiser and more confident. I'm contributing more to the school now so I definitely feel like I belong more"*
- *"I feel that MRGS would not be the safe school it is today if it wasn't for the mediations offered at our school."*
- *"Now I'm a Mediator, I don't get into physical fights because I don't want to lose my badge. I take a deep breath, walk away and try and be a good role model".*

I appreciate all the support that the Peace Foundation provides us at MRGS and fully endorse their application for funding.

If you need any further information, please do not hesitate to contact me.

Ngā manaakitanga



Donna Hourigan-Johnston (MA Hons)

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**MOUNT ROSKILL
GRAMMAR SCHOOL**

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February 2024

To whom it may concern,

I am writing to express our strong support for the Peer Mediators program, which has been running in our school - Hobsonville Point Secondary School for almost 10 years now.

The need for this program is evident from the alarming statistics that In New Zealand, 32% of students reported being bullied at least a few times a month and the Peer Mediators group teaches students ways to restoratively resolve conflict within their own friendships and to help other students navigate their conflict and disagreements.

We have enjoyed having the program in our school and the students involved have run many awareness campaigns and projects around the school, which promote the message of peace and resolving conflict of all kinds. These projects reach all of the students in our school and create a positive impact on the awareness of our students and further deepen their learning about the world and the social issues within it.

This program mirrors the restorative values of the school and is a valued resource for our staff and students. By improving conflict resolution skills at an early age, we can help set these teenagers on a path toward success in school and in life.

I urge you to support this vital program and invest in the future of our community.

Thank you for your consideration.

Sincerely,

Jessica Channon



Counsellor and Teacher in charge of the Peer Mediators

30 January 2024

To Whom It May Concern

I am writing to wholeheartedly endorse the outstanding work and steadfast support provided by Christina Barruel and the entire Peace Foundation team. Their influence has played a pivotal role in shaping the positive culture at ACG Strathallan, a co-educational private school located in South Auckland since its establishment in 2001.

In 2019, recognising a distinct need for additional support within our school community, particularly concerning the intricate dynamics of our junior cohort integrating into a college environment, I approached Christina with the idea of implementing a Peer Mediator service. This initiative aimed not only to address the existing gaps in leadership opportunities for our students but also to foster a sense of responsibility and empowerment among them.

Christina took on the challenge with enthusiasm, commencing the training of our first set of Peer Mediators in February 2020. The impact was immediate and transformative. Equipped with valuable skills and techniques acquired during the training, the Peer Mediators demonstrated an adept ability to manage situations and proactively address minor issues before they escalated. Over time, as they encountered various scenarios, their communication and response strategies became increasingly refined.

Remarkably, many of the initial Peer Mediators are now serving as senior prefects and head students, a testament to the programme's effectiveness in nurturing leadership qualities. As we enter our fifth year of the Peer Mediator programme, it has become a cornerstone of our school's culture, contributing significantly to the positive ethos that defines our community.

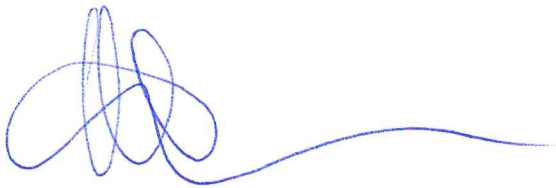
The impact on the school culture has been profound. A palpable shift towards a more harmonious and collaborative environment is evident, with students actively engaging in conflict resolution and demonstrating greater empathy and understanding. The programme has not only empowered the Peer Mediators themselves but has created a ripple effect, positively influencing their peers who have been recipients of mediation.

Students involved in the mediation process report feeling heard and understood, fostering a sense of community and mutual respect. The Peer Mediator programme has become a channel for building connections and resolving conflicts constructively, contributing to an overall atmosphere of inclusivity and support.

Moreover, teachers have significantly benefited from the implementation of the programme. The burden on educators to address conflicts and maintain discipline has eased, allowing them to focus more on teaching and creating a positive learning environment. The programme has also provided teachers with valuable insights into the dynamics of student relationships, enabling them to tailor their support and guidance more effectively.

In conclusion, the Peer Mediator programme has not only shaped a more positive and collaborative school culture but has also had a profound impact on the personal and leadership development of the Peer Mediators and the well-being of their peers. Teachers have found relief and gained insights, making the programme an invaluable asset to the entire school community.

Yours faithfully,



Matt Humber

LtPM Co-ordinator

Dean of Y9 and 10

ACG Strathallan