

# **BANKSIA ADMISSION INFORMATION FOR SCHOOLS**



## **BANKSIA WARD & BANKSIA EDUCATION**

The Banksia Ward is located at the Royal Children's Hospital. It is a 16-bed inpatient unit where young people aged 12 to 18 years are assessed and treated for a range of mental and psychological disorders.

Banksia Education is a Travancore School program that supports the educational needs of young people on the Banksia Ward, during an admission.

The Banksia Classroom promotes a safe and positive learning space, where all young people are encouraged to engage with learning during their admission. Time in Banksia is generally short. To best meet the immediate learning needs of our students our teaching focus is on the Victorian Curriculum Personal and Social Capabilities and Critical and Creative Thinking Capabilities, through participation in strengths-based group learning activities. Some young people may also be supported to complete their own school work.

## **SCHOOL CONNECTEDNESS**

School connectedness has been identified as an important protective factor which has significant implications for health and education outcomes.

A Key Teacher is allocated to each young person during their admission to support and maintain connections with their school or education setting. Key Teachers work collaboratively with students, schools, the Banksia care team, community organisations, and parents/carers to support the individual needs of students and support their return to school.

## **Once consent has been given by the parent/carer or young person, TRAVANCORE SCHOOL, BANKSIA EDUCATION CAN ASSIST WITH:**

- Informing you that your student is in hospital and updating you on their length of stay & possible discharge date,
- Sharing feedback from the student about what is currently going well for them at school, and identifying possible areas of concern,
- Developing a draft Return to School Plan with your student, which will be emailed to you,
- Supporting the student to continue with their own school work during their inpatient stay, when appropriate' and
- Sharing school information/key concerns with the Banksia Care Coordinator.

## **RECOMMENDED SCHOOL ACTIONS**

- Arranging a return to school meeting to acknowledge the admission and discuss supports moving forward.
- Linking your student in with the Wellbeing team at school, and a regular check-in person.
- Consider a gradual return to school, with a reduced timetable for a short period of time.
- Connect with the student's community case manager or follow up support.
- Encourage the student to share their Banksia Recovery Plan with relevant staff. This may inform your School Safety Plan for this student.
- Discuss/rehearse with the student how they can respond to peer questions about their absence from school.

## FAQ

**How long will my student stay in hospital?** *Each young person's length of admission in Banksia is different and will be determined by the Banksia treating team. The average length of admission is 4 days. If the expected discharge date is known, we will communicate that to you, and update you on changes.*

**Can I visit my student in the hospital?** *Yes, although this depends on the young person's length of stay and your availability/location. This visit should be organised with the Key Teacher or someone from the Treating Team. If you cannot visit, it is possible to arrange a phone call to link in with your student.*

**Will my school be given information about why the young person is in hospital and current medications?** *Information about a young person's reason for admission, diagnosis and treatment is confidential. The family & the young person can choose to share this information. We encourage young people and their families to share their Banksia Recovery Plan with relevant school staff as this information can assist the school support team to identify appropriate support and strategies for the school environment. Queries about this confidential information can be directed to Case Managers providing community treatment or parents/carers.*

**What happens once my student is discharged from hospital?** *This can vary for each young person depending on their individual situation. In most cases there will be a follow-up appointment with the young person and their community mental health support team post discharge from Banksia. Where practical, we strongly recommend the young person return to school and their normal routines as soon as possible, as this can contribute significantly to a young person's successful recovery and limit anxiety around the return to school.*

**Can you send through a completed School Safety Plan for my student?** *No, we recommend a key support person at school (Wellbeing Coordinator/Chaplin/Year Level Coordinator) create or update an existing School Safety Plan/Student Support Plan with the young person that fits within the context of your school. A young person will complete a Banksia Recovery Plan for home, with their assigned Nurse before they are discharged from the hospital. This document can often help guide the School Safety Plan/Student Support Plan. Whilst we encourage the young person and their families/carers to share this information, it is at their discretion, as this plan often contains their most sensitive and private thoughts and feelings.*

**Can you send through a written letter from the doctor to state that my student is safe to return to school?** *No. A young person's risk can change periodically. Once the young person is discharged from the hospital they will not continue to work with the Banksia care team. Any assessment of risk only applies at the time it is conducted. We strongly recommend that you stay well connected with the Community support person assigned to that young person, who will be able to offer ongoing information about how the young person's mental health is travelling at the time.*

**Who should be at the return to school meeting?** *The young person, parent or carer and key support staff. In complex cases where the school is requesting additional support, we recommend the school inviting the Community Case Manager to attend via telephone. **Will a Travancore Teacher be there?** *No, our small teaching team at Banksia do not have capacity to attend school meetings.**

**Who can I contact if I need more support?** *We recommend the school stay in contact with the young person's community support team (CAMHS, Orygen, private etc.) to track how the young person is travelling. If you are unsure of who this is, it is best to ask the young person and their parents/carers.*

*If you wish to refer a young person to a clinical service, call the Child and Adolescent Mental Health Service for your region. View the following link to find your local service and referral number.*

<http://www.health.vic.gov.au/mentalhealthservices/child/index.htm>

*If an immediate crisis response is required, please contact 000.*