

TRAVANCORE SCHOOL



2022

ANNUAL REPORT



Travancore School acknowledges the Traditional Custodians of the Land on which we work. We pay our respects to Elders past, present and emerging. We are committed to making a positive contribution to the education and wellbeing of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander young people and their families.



Travancore School values and celebrates diversity and is committed to eliminating all forms of discrimination in the provision of educational services.

School Report

In 2022 the school welcomed the return to business as usual with staff returning back to their programs onsite full time. All programs continued to successfully collaborate with our mental health partners at the Royal Children's Hospital, Melbourne University and Orygen Specialist program. Our positive relationships with young people and staff at various schools across the northern and western region is vital to our work and our staff should be incredibly proud of this important work. The key data we collected throughout 2022 highlights the positive impact our unique programs have to build the capacity of schools to support vulnerable young people. Throughout 2022 each team worked collaboratively on curriculum planning, delivery and reflection to ensure that every young person who participated in our programs was provided with opportunities to successfully achieve their educational goals. In 2023 we will continue to refine and be responsive to the Education Department's state wide reforms to improve teacher practice (specifically Professional Learning Communities - PLCs), student learning outcomes and whole school staff and student wellbeing. We welcome the new reforms relating to disability inclusion, senior study and mental health as we are well placed to support our colleagues in mainstream schools to implement the upcoming changes.

Farewell and Thanks

After many heartfelt goodbyes in 2021, we finally bid farewell to our illustrious Principal Judy Ring at the end of Term 1 after a staggering 34 years of service at Travancore School. As shared in a range of forums & networks, Judy's impact in improving the mental health and wellbeing for young people and their families has been profound. Judy has left a legacy at Travancore School and we thank her for her outstanding leadership.

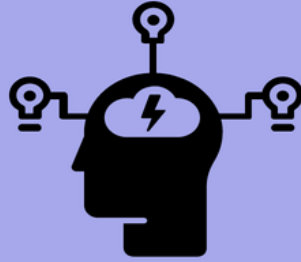
We would also like to acknowledge and thank Alan Devine for his leadership and support in 2022. Alan stepped into the Acting Principal role in Term 2 and worked with the School Improvement Team to drive the actions and outcomes of the Annual Implementation Plan and navigate the implementation of a new Victorian Schools Agreement. Alan started us on our journey to reimagine the Travancore School's Vision and Values. We look forward to building on this work in 2023. Special thanks also to Poppy Nixon and Kate Tyndall for their leadership of the school throughout a significant time of change and uncertainty.

TRAVANCORE SCHOOL

Key Partner Feedback 2022



95% felt they had a voice at Trav School



STUDENT RESPONSES (n = 58)

100% feel we provide a safe learning environment

96%

say it is OK to be different at Trav School.

88% said there was a Trav teacher who believed in them

100%

feel our teachers encourage & expect them to do their best

Students: Has Travancore school been helpful?



PARTNER SCHOOL RESPONSES (n = 73)



80%

school staff report we have helped build their capacity to support students

93% of school staff were satisfied with the level of support provided by Trav School

86% believed there was effective two-way communication between our school and parents

81% believe we have helped their child experience success and build confidence

PARENT/ CARER RESPONSES (n = 63)



94% believe our school treats their child with respect



100%

believe Trav School have supported the education based needs of the young people in their clinical care.

MENTAL HEALTH PARTNER RESPONSES (n = 24)

Most helpful work of Trav Teachers:

Liaising with schools
Supporting transitions back to school
Providing strategies & support



Travancore School Outreach Team

Meet the team



Mary O'Brien (team leader), Kate Tyndall, Brony Dennis, Lou Waycott

The Travancore School Outreach Team (TSOT) focus, in line with the Travancore School goals, has been to continue to promote and support positive educational outcomes for all our students.

TSOT started the year with limited on-site attendance with the team working mostly from home. Communicating with our RCH mental health partners, schools, parents/carers and our students was done mainly via online meeting platforms, email, over the phone and the occasional face to face meeting. One of our learnings from working remotely and online is the realisation that we are still able to build strong relationships with our partners using these technologies. Additionally, this can be a massive time saver, as there is no travel time involved and it has proven simpler to get several professionals to the same meeting with greater ease. Online meetings are now an integral part of our practice, whilst challenging at times, particularly given 'Covid fatigue' impacting all stakeholders, especially for some of our students and schools, our work continued and was effective.

The 2022 TSOT year began with Lisa Didomenica joining the team, a new staff member to Travancore School. The other team members were Karen Wilson, Sonja Van Buuren, Kate Tyndall, Brony Dennis, Lou Waycott and Mary O'Brien. There have been many staff changes to the TSOT team throughout the year. We supported other programs including In2School and the Banksia program, Lisa moved across to Banksia in Term 2, Sonja went on Maternity Leave in term 3, Brony took Long Service Leave in term 2, Karen re-established the In2School program in term 4 (joined by Lisa) and Lou moved across to Banksia in term 4.

In 2022 one TSOT teacher was allocated to each of the three RCH CAMHS teams: Mary, Kate and Brony.

Our focus this year has included:

- developing and integrating our goal moderation process into everyday practice and being able to assess the impact of our work more accurately
- developing a TSOT IEP and strategies around when and how to most effectively use it to guide of work and inform the schools we work with
- continuing to develop our practice around supporting students with school avoidance/refusal behaviours as these students are now our largest cohort
- continuing to build capacity of staff in our partner schools and support our mental health partners by way of providing consultations, the BCTC and OTC programs as well as professional learning

Looking forward, we are adapting our practice to more fully encompass and accommodate the needs of the primary aged students (5-12 years) who will become our main student group next year. This age change has been a recommendation of the Mental Health Royal Commission and will be implemented by RCH MH late in 2023.

Thank you to the team for all the amazing work they have done this year and for always being flexible, collaborative, and professional. The team are dedicated to developing best practice, embracing new initiatives, and keeping the needs of our young people and families at the centre of their work.

Feedback from:

RCH Mental Health partners/case managers:

- Very helpful for case managers to have someone who can support liaison and communication with schools. Also, able to gather rich info about school and share/explain/translate that to CM

Parents/carers:

- Giving the time and support listening to X's needs to develop her confidence in moving forward

Partner schools:

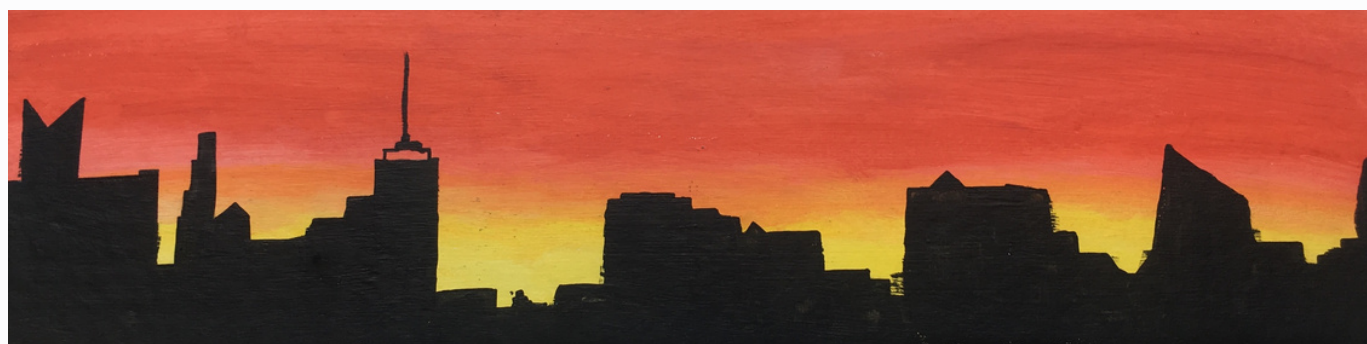
- We refined our current strategies and gained access to a range of additional resources. We also put into place a calm to escalation plan that has been effective in supporting both staff and students.

OTC specifically

- I wouldn't say there were any barriers to success - all our OTC sessions have had a positive impact in one way or another
- I would love the opportunity to continue being involved in the OTC program.

Students:

- Thank you so much, I appreciate it so much. Thank you for getting me to a stage where I can be at school at least and thank you for all the coping strategies you've taught me about.
- Thank you for helping me and my mum find a high school for me and all your time and effort you have put in for us. It was very thoughtful. *From Adam*



Meet the team



**Caitlin White (team leader), Nat Adam, Shayne McConachy, Leigh Enright
Jen Ritchie-Jones**

At Banksia we aim to collaborate and support young people in an educational setting during a hospital admission. We do this by providing a safe, engaging, and respectful learning environment for students to continue their education, as well as maintaining connections with their home school, parents/carers & key partners to share their education goals.

RETURNING TO EDUCATION

For the first time in two years, our young people have been able to attend their schools in the community uninterrupted by restrictions and school shutdowns. For Banksia Education, this has allowed the teachers to once again more easily connect with our partner schools and on occasion, allow our student's teachers to visit them during an admission. Despite COVID continuing to be at the forefront of our minds, the team ensured that our young people received the best educational care possible and worked with flexibility, creativity and compassion.

LIVING CULTURE

Throughout this year, Banksia Education have been fortunate enough to have Lionel Lauch and Heidi Duell from Living Culture deliver First Nations workshops to our young people and staff. Lionel's workshops included a communal dreaming painting created by the young people, Indigenous jewellery making, showcasing and explanation of traditional Indigenous tools, Yidaki healing and meditation and a guided walk through the parklands surrounding the RCH, where Lionel highlighted the abundance of native indigenous fauna and flora and their use and significance in medicine, bush tucker and Indigenous culture. Below is some feedback from one of our students who attended one of the Living Culture workshops:

"I learnt the importance of Australian plants, their uses and Aboriginal culture. I found learning about meditation and the culture Aboriginal people have and the way they respect women, insightful. I want to know more about the practice of meditation in Aboriginal culture."

THANK YOU

We welcomed new team members to the team this year with Rebecca Gib joining the team 3 days a week, Lisa Di Domenica full time in term 3 and Louise Waycott 3 days a week in term 4. Thank you to everyone for being so flexible and willing to help out the Banksia Team.

We want to say a big thank you and congratulations to Shayne McConachy in term 1 and Sonja Van Buuren in term 2, who supported the team as Team Leaders before bidding us farewell and welcoming their bundles of joy.

We also said farewell to Jennifer Ritchie Jones who has gone on to live her best mermaid life on the north coast of New South Wales.

Thank you to our Nurse Unit Manager, Adam Blake for his continued support for our team and our classroom program. Especially the Care Co-ordinators, Nursing and Support staff that we work with.

Lastly, thank you to the entire Banksia Education team. The classroom program is an integral part of the care provided by Banksia, and you foster positive relationships with students, family, school, and the wider Banksia care team.



Students working collaboratively in the classroom



Indigenous jewellery made in the Living Culture Workshop



Artwork created in the Living Culture Workshop inspired by Indigenous themes

Parkville/Sunshine

Meet the team



Lorraine McCallig (team leader), Claire Greve, Bec Gibb, Bec Plunkett

Our purpose is to support young people to improve their engagement with current or new education settings using a strength-based framework.

This year the team, Bec G, Claire, Bec P and Lorraine, have successfully navigated two terms of working from home with a transition back into the Orygen spaces for terms 3 and 4. Like previous years, we continue to be endlessly impressed with the remarkable resilience and determination that young people with ill mental health have shown throughout this time. Particularly as they took on the challenge of transitioning back into face-to-face learning after a challenging two and a half years studying at home. We all delighted in the joy of sharing space with each other – sharing ideas, learning new skills, and making new connections.

Our education program is delivered in a flexible learning environment, with a holistic approach to wellbeing and educational goals, giving our students the opportunity to work on individual areas of interest, integrated projects, and team activities. We aimed to reconnect young people with education and empower them with a variety of tools to build a positive future.

This year the team focussed on updating the Parkville/Sunshine protocol manual. This was a big task, but we all met the challenge. We also developed a moderation matrix and focused on refining student goals and success criteria.

Sunshine classroom - Competitive UNO games were a perfect tonic for the collective need to engage with others and demonstrate in-person that Travancore School is a safe place where learning and respectful relationships go hand in hand. This year we were also very lucky to have a young person's assistance dog named Denver join our classroom, a first for Travancore School. We are also very fortunate during Semester 2 to be joined by Marty to support our 'School's In' classes on Tuesdays, and Lorraine supporting in the Outreach program, further highlighting the strength and flexibility of our teamwork.

Parkville/Sunshine

Schools In - Parkville campus The Parkville program was a hive of activity this year especially toward the festive season. There was a variety of students who attended the sessions, goals to learn and connect with people, both peers and teachers. Our focus was on kindness and gratitude, and learnt that is the recipe for happiness. A gratitude tree was built, and we all enjoyed sharing and learning. We dived deeply into the festive season where all young people created delicious gingerbread houses. However, lots of lollies had to be tested and sampled by all, before they were put onto the house.

Outreach

The outreach component of the team's work continued to support school staff and Orygen staff to navigate the ever-changing landscape brought on by life in a post-pandemic world. Our students' outcomes have overall been very positive and always responsive to the individual needs of our young people as they navigate their education journey. Many of our students have successfully reengaged with school and all have a clear education transition plan for 2023.

As the year comes to an end, we farewell Bec G. We would like to acknowledge and share our gratitude for all the wonderful work Bec has done both with supporting young people, as well as a much-valued member of the PS team, who is always willing to share in her wisdom and experience. We will dearly miss her great sense of humour, cleverness and big-hearted nature and are very thankful that she will still be at Travancore School and continuing her exceptional work as a member of the Banksia team in 2023. In 2023 we will welcome Kate McKinstry to the team.

We are very much looking forward to returning onsite in 2023. We return onsite full time, and all education sessions will be run face to face. We are looking forward to enjoying the simple things such as sharing ideas and listening to each other, focusing on engagement and connection.

Be safe – Be happy
Lorraine, Bec G, Bec M and Claire.



Operation Newstart

Meet the team



Will Morgan, Paul Stafford

Operation Newstart Western aims to provide a safe and inclusive learning environment for disengaged students and assist them to develop their personal and social skills and strengthen their pathways for future learning.

Returning to regular programming:

This was our first year after Covid and we ran 4 successful programs. We were hampered by weather and flooding with some of our activities and a camp in term 4. We worked closely with leadership to come up with alternatives and are very proud to have had a wonderful year in Newstart. We have continued to work closely with ONV and are in the process of learning from each other to work out best practice for Newstart.

Student outcomes/learnings

Term 1 Newstart, we started out with 7 young people and all 7 graduated. There were several challenges within the group as we had one student move to NSW before the end of program, but with zoom and the internet, we were able to arrange for him to be present at our graduation.

Term 2 Newstart, once again we started with 7 young people and all 7 graduated. The group dynamic was amazing and these young people all thrived in the supportive and caring environment we all created together. Several of the young people shared at our reunion that Newstart was the highlight of their year.

Term 3 iLead, we started the ilead program with 9 young people and 9 graduated. This group bonded incredibly well from the outset and all young people grew and bettered themselves throughout the program. They thrived developing our community project and one young person mentioned that they now want to work with special needs children in the future thanks to her experiences on iLead.

Term 4 Newstart, This term we started off with 8 young people and 7 graduated and 1 received a participation certificate. We had to navigate challenging group dynamics and a range of external difficulties students were facing. Additionally, we had to be responsive to environmental changes causing last minute adaptations to the program due to floods and extreme weather.

Operation Newstart

Highlights

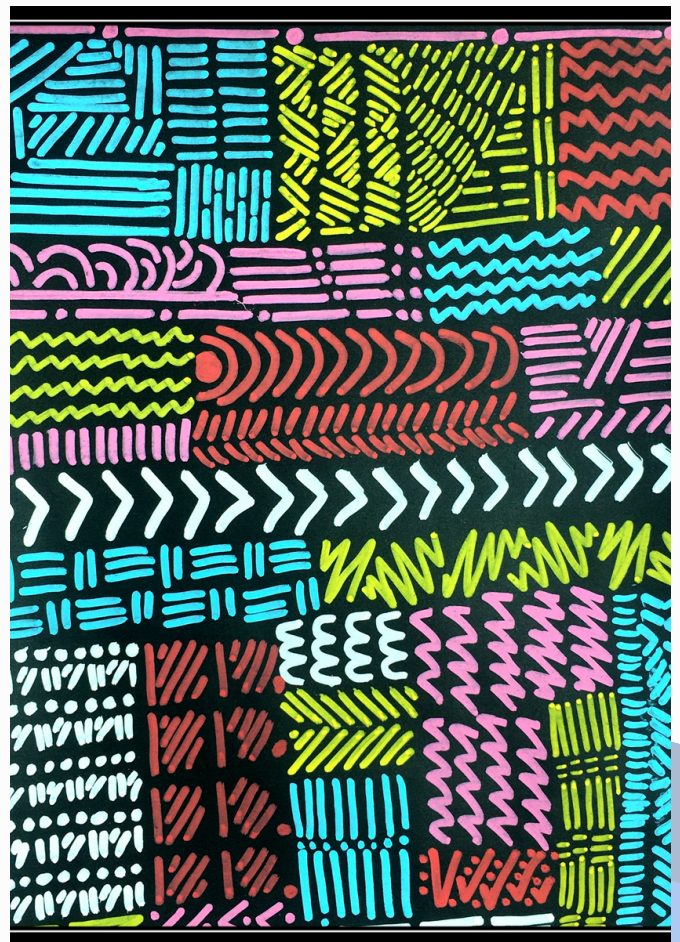
- 4 successful programs for the first time since Covid.
- Catching up with all Reunions, during 2021 it was not possible to run the reunions, we caught up with each program and will now run a 6 month reunion each term.
- Working with ONV and the end of year ONV PD where we learned from each other and shared new and useful program activities. There has been a great deal of work put in to bring operation Newstart programs together and ensure that we are offering programs with similar outcomes. The experience in the other Operation Newstart has been invaluable for Paul and Will who are relatively new to the program.

Team thanks

Huge thanks to Will for joining Newstart and taking the program like a duck to water. He did a fantastic job with our term 4 interviews and selection process while Paul was on Long Service Leave. His kind and caring nature has been an asset to the program and the young people we have worked with this year.

We recognise the Youth Work placement students we had this year and thank them for their energy and enthusiasm.

We would also like to shout out to Kate Tyndall for being an ear to listen and give us some advice, as well as help out when Will was in QLD.



Meet the team



Karen Wilson, Lisa Didomenica, Sonja Van Buuren

In2School aims to create a safe, engaging and positive learning experience that provides opportunities for students to build the skills and connections that support their transition to full time school attendance.

In2School returns!

After a two-year hiatus the In2School program was rebooted in mid-2022. A new team was formed, including teachers Karen Wilson and Lisa Didomenica, as well as mental health clinicians Katie Anderson and Alice Brennan (with support from Chrystie Mitchell). Professional learning was delivered to the Royal Children's Hospital Mental Health (RCH MH) teams about school refusal and how the In2School program works. The classroom received a much-needed make-over. Referrals were received from clinical teams late Term 3 and with great excitement we finally welcomed our tenth intake of students and their families into the program at the start of Term 4.

Highlights

Our students worked hard to build up their attendance in the In2School classroom across Term 4. Our classroom program focuses on capabilities-based learning including character strengths, the adolescent brain, growth mindset, positive coping strategies and problem-solving, as well as opportunities for students to develop their literacy and numeracy skills. Students also participated in art, cooking, fitness, mental health and social communication sessions. Students have been at the very centre of the goal-setting and transition to school planning processes, sharing their voices about what they want to work towards and how they would like to be supported. Through both group and individual support, students were encouraged to build their stamina, resilience and self-regulation skills in preparation for their transition to their home schools in 2023.

The In2School students demonstrated so much bravery and curiosity in coming together and getting to know each other in Term 4. Although each student is on their own pathway, they have benefited enormously from meeting other students who struggle with getting to school and sharing the goal of improving school attendance. The group have done an amazing job of supporting one another through the highs and lows of the term. As part of a group challenge, students came up with the name 'Trav Troopers' and designed an impressive logo to represent the group.

Out and About excursions have been a highlight of the year and have given the group opportunities to connect with each other, have fun, explore amazing places and be challenged in new ways. We visited the Werribee Open Range Zoo, Australian Centre for the Moving Image, Flemington Lawn Bowls, Rone's 'Time' exhibition, National Gallery of Victoria, Treetops Adventure, as well as an incursion with musician Motley to create a hip hop track to finish the year.

As part of our wraparound approach, parents/carers and school support teams attended sessions throughout Term 4 to develop their knowledge of school refusal and to understand how they can best support students to work towards their goals and build their school attendance.

Appreciations

Thank you to the In2School Team and everyone that has supported the rebooted program and the current group of students. A special shout out to the outreach teachers (Brony Dennis, Mary O'Brien and Kate Tyndall) and the RCH speech pathologists (Claire Everitt, Shanae Bond and Leonie Wilson) for their contributions to the program. We would also like to acknowledge the leadership and staff members at Travancore School and RCH MH that helped with sprucing up the In2School classroom and getting the program back off the ground. It has truly been a team effort!



Printmaking



In2School Classroom



EES Conference 2022

After a 2-year COVID-19 enforced pause, the Extraordinary Education Setting (EES) Conference was once again able to convene. This saw the wonderful teaching and learning teams from The Austin School, Avenues Education, Monash Children's Hospital School, Travancore School, Yarra Me School and RCH Education Institute spend a day together. The aim of the EES conference was for the teams within these environments to meet, network and learn from others offering hospital-linked education services. The day focused on strategies to ensure the wellbeing of both staff and students, and the participants were lucky enough to have multiple presentations throughout the day to understand and explore this further.

Kicking off the presentation was Danielle Jacobs from Wellbeing Lab. Danielle discussed warning signs and practical actions to help manage passion fatigue and general wellbeing. Danielle encouraged the participants to self-reflect and explore behaviours that could potentially lead them to burnout. She countered this inward look with concrete steps which can be used to balance work-life balance, while still maintaining job passion and enthusiasm.

Alana Wearne from Safe Schools took the participants on a journey to understand some of the challenges and obstacles felt by students of the LGBTIQ+ community. Her creative approach to her presentation allowed staff to briefly walk in the shoes of this community. In addition, this allowed the RCHEI team to experience how some students often try to hide aspects of themselves from others which is exhausting and stressful. Alana unpacked strategies and provided practical advice for teachers to take back to both classroom and individual settings. She encouraged the participants to continue to develop their awareness of safe educational settings and make an effort to ensure we provide inclusive learning environments.

Paul Zappa from Respectful Relationships took the RCHEI members through his work exploring shame and other negative emotions, and the influence these can have on our student's personal and social development. He spoke of his "Man Box" research and the impact of gender expectations on respectful and equal relationships within society. His key message to the conference was on the importance of questioning past norms and implementing strategies that empower students to foster healthy and balanced relationships.

Rounding out the presentations was Simon Kuestenmacher from Thee Demographics Group. Never have statistics and data been presented in such a fun and captivating way. Simon's use of data analysis to explore community behaviours was both informative and fascinating. He gave an insight into the future awaiting our students, the economic landscape, the resulting jobs market and associated educational demands. Simon spoke of the need for today's education to not only reflect the current workforce but to also look into this future and ensure that teachers are building into the curriculum the skills necessary to support this outlook. For example, he encouraged the teachers to focus on developing soft skills in their students by embedding practice opportunities in every lesson.

EES Conference 2022

The day wrapped up with a dance class run by Stomp Dance Company. This got everyone up out of their seats, shaking their arms in the air and dancing along to a funky beat. Other than the good laugh, this activity was a fantastic team-building experience and a lovely way to wind up the conference.



External Professional Learning & Capacity Building

After navigating the challenges of providing professional learning during the pandemic, it was wonderful to return to the face-to-face delivery of professional learning in 2022. The joint training calendar, co facilitated with Orygen, Headspace and RCH saw the delivery of Time to Reflect (Secondary) and School Refusal Professional Learning.

The Travancore School's demand to facilitate secondary consultation continued to increase in 2022. We were able to deliver, in partnership with RCHMH, secondary consults using the frameworks 'Opportunity to Consult' and 'Building Capacity to Consult'. We also provided secondary consultation to McKillop Education as part of the roll out of In2School@School.

We look forward to continuing to grow our professional learning program in 2023.

