



WINMALEE HIGH SCHOOL

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winmalee-h.schools.nsw.gov.au f Winmalee High School - Official

Term 1 Week 3 Communication – Thursday 12 February 2026

Dear Parents and Carers,

Warami. Thank you to all students who attended the Swimming Carnival on Tuesday. It was a great day, and the Year 12 costumes were fantastic! It is a long-standing tradition for Year 12 to have a fancy dress theme on this day, and they did not disappoint. To see some photos please go to our school [Facebook page](#).

On Assembly today, the winners of the **Splash 'n Dash** were given their cash prizes – congratulations to, **Willow Bracegirdle** 7-12 Girls' winner, **Kai Justic** Junior Boys' winner and **Luke Chapman**, Senior Boys' winner. The Term 4 Best and Fairest in Grade Sport Champions were also announced – well done to Year 10 students, **Zahra Campbell & Eli Schroeder**. The team are still compiling results for Zone qualifiers.

In other sporting news, we have an NRL Referee training course on next week. It is a free course. Interested students can collect a note from Mr Bonora in the PDHPE staffroom. There are also trials coming up for a range of sporting teams over the coming weeks. We encourage interested students to keep an eye on notices and announcements so they can participate.

Thank you to our SRC - On Monday we had a focus on leadership, thanking members of the Student Representative Council for their service to the school. The SRC shared a pizza lunch with Mrs Cooper and Ms Facas. In the evening, our Captains and Prefects had a planning dinner in Springwood, focusing on preparing for their final terms leading the school. Our Senior Leadership team will be mentoring new Year 7 students interested in joining the SRC later in the year, as well as working closely with Year 11 students who will be applying for 2026/27 Captain and Prefect roles. We have an outstanding team, and we look forward to a great year. The SRC are already busy planning for their next event, The World's Greatest Shave, as well as other initiatives.




Sound and Lighting training – we have a skilled and committed team of students who have been leading sound and lighting for a range of school events, including our weekly assemblies. **Blake Goodman, Sam Drysdale and Nicholas Down** (Year 10) and **Darcey Dunn** (Year 11) led a training session yesterday for our new student

teams. We would like to thank our existing team for their work in supporting the school, and for sharing their expertise so they can hand over the reigns to the next generation of tech support.



Pictured: Blake, Sam, Nicholas, Luke, Archie, James, Lucas, Darcey, Henry, Emily, Darcy and Zoe.



NAPLAN 2026 - This term, our Year 7 and Year 9 students will be sitting for NAPLAN, completing four assessments during Week 7 and 8. At Winmalee High School, we see NAPLAN as an opportunity to gain valuable insights into student learning. Our focus is on **student effort**, ensuring every child approaches the assessments with a **positive mindset and a willingness to do their best**.

The results from NAPLAN are not just numbers - they help us identify specific learning areas that need support and allow us to implement **evidence-based teaching strategies** to target those skills effectively. By understanding each student's strengths and areas for growth, we can tailor our teaching to meet their needs and enhance their learning experience.

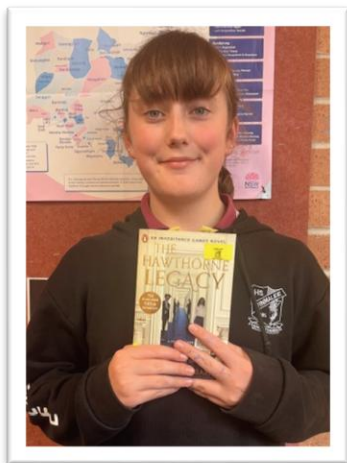
For Year 9 students, NAPLAN is their final opportunity for formal exam practice before they sit the HSC Minimum Standards Tests in Year 10, where achieving a Level 3 is essential for obtaining their HSC. This year's NAPLAN serves as an ideal chance to develop the key literacy and numeracy skills required for the HSC Minimum Standards Tests, Year 11 Preliminary Exams, HSC Trials, and the final HSC Examinations. **Encouraging students to approach NAPLAN with focus and effort will help build their confidence and readiness for future assessments.**

Adjustments are available for students who have diverse functional abilities and needs. Reasonable adjustments are made for individual students on a case-by-case basis so they can complete NAPLAN. Eligible students will receive a note home regarding these provisions. If you have concerns or believe your child should receive provisions, please speak to Bree Hinchey-Holley.

We encourage all students to approach NAPLAN with the goal of doing their best. Thank you for your support in fostering a growth mindset and a strong learning culture at Winmalee High School. We will share more detailed information and a timetable of the assessments directly with Year 7 and 9 parents in the lead up to the testing period.

What are you reading?

Last year, we shared the books that school staff were reading. This year, we will focus on some reviews from our students. Our first book review comes from **Georgia Walker in Year 8**. Georgia is an avid reader, an SRC member, and a member of our school Book Club. She has taken the time to write our first student led book review for the year. Thanks, Georgia!



The Hawthorne Legacy - Jennifer Lynn Barnes

In this book, the main character is Avery Grambs., a 17-year-old girl who inherits Tobias Hawthorne's money and assets. The terms of the Will specify that she has to live in the Hawthorne Mansion for one year, then she will get all said money and assets.

The Hawthorn Legacy is the second book in the series. In the first book, Avery moves into the Hawthorne house, with all the grandsons of Tobias Hawthorne. There are 4 grandsons, Nash the oldest, Grayson and Jamison the 2 middle children (not twins), and Xander the youngest.

In Tobias's Will, he leaves clues for Avery and his grandsons to figure out what happened to his son, Toby, also known as Tobias Hawthorn the Second. Avery, Xander and Jameson are now trying to figure out what happened to Toby, because 20 years ago he and three of his 'alleged friends' died in a house fire. But Avery gets shown a photo of Toby and realises that he's Harry, a homeless man she used to play chess with, in the park.

Now, as they dig deeper, the more riddles, clues and lies are revealed. And while all the puzzles are trying to be solved, Avery has feelings for two of the Hawthorne brothers, Jameson and Grayson. While Jameson is helping Avery to solve the mystery that is Toby Hawthorn, Xander has made his own team to solve the puzzle.

When Avery suspects Toby to be her father, she is more determined than ever to find him. But when her father, Ricky comes in and wants to be her legal guardian instead of Libby, her older sister, the equation of Avery Grambs becomes twice as hard. Just after Toby died, Tobias Hawthorne re-wrote his Will. Avery is determined to figure out why. When you trust a Hawthorn, it becomes a very risky gamble.

*I give this book a five out of five! Thank you, Ms Facas for letting me write this and I can't wait for book club to start back up. **Georgia***



Last week, the Year 10 support class teachers, Ms Walbank and Mr Dutton, finished planning and planting the no-dig garden. The garden focus is based on the Life Skills Term 1 Science Curriculum. The students will learn about how to care for plants and to watch them grow over Term 1. The herbs growing are basil, lemon verbena, and parsley, which are planted in the beds. Snow peas, capsicum, zucchini and button squash are in the no-dig bags to reduce water consumption and are easier to care for.

The dahlias (from Mr Pendergast) were planted last year and remain in place. I'm hoping that with regular watering, in time, the soil moisture will improve to allow for planting in the ground as a follow-on project.

The Year 10 support class students are already enjoying the change to the school environment.



Congratulations to the following students who have been successful in their applications for Principal Performer roles in **Pulse Alive 2026** in the following category/ies:

Principal Vocalist - **Liam Boys (Year 11)**

Showband (French Horn) - **Mae Ballard (Year 7)**

Showband (Tenor Saxophone) - **Archie Ballard (Year 9)**

Showband (Trumpet) - **Oliver Cusack (Year 11)**

Pulse Alive 2026 will be held on Wednesday 18, Thursday 19 and Friday 20 March 2026 at 7.30pm at the Ken Rosewall Arena - Corner Olympic Boulevard and Shirley Strickland Avenue, Sydney Olympic Park. Tickets for Pulse Alive 2026 via Ticketmaster [are now on sale](#).





Shoutout to **James Magner (Year 11)** who is participating in the Starlight Super Swim for the Starlight Children's Foundation. He is doing 20 laps a day at Springwood Pool in February, swimming 14km in total.

Go to <https://superswim.org.au/j-magner> for more information and to donate to this great cause.



SCHOOL PHOTO DAY

DAY OF PHOTOGRAPHY

FRIDAY 6TH MARCH 2026

1. Place your order online before the day of photography - go to www.advancedlife.com.au.
2. The school code is available through the parent portal.
3. Payment can be made using *VISA, Mastercard or Paypal.*
4. Students are required to wear their full summer school uniform on the day.
5. If you are unable to order online, please complete an order envelope and hand it directly to photographers on the day of photography.

*If you have any queries concerning ordering, please contact **advancedlife** directly - www.advancedlife.com.au/contact*

advancedlife
school photography & print specialists

🎓 **WHS Alumni Spotlight: Stacey Sheather (Class of 1995)**

We're thrilled to share the stories of our former students with the school and wider community, highlighting their experiences at WHS and the diverse journeys they've taken since graduating.

This week **Stacey Sheather** shares her reflections on her time at Winmalee High and where life has taken her since.

Check out Stacey's Q&A at the end of the Newsletter and stay tuned as we continue celebrating the amazing paths our alumni are forging!

We would love to hear from as many former students as possible across a wide range of years and pathways for our Alumni Spotlight feature. Former students can go to [WHS Alumni Q & A](#) to fill out the form and share their experiences with us.



CANTEEN VOLUNTEERS REQUIRED



If you have some time to spare and can assist in the Canteen on any day, your support would be greatly valued. Volunteers typically work from 9:30am to 2:00pm, assisting with food preparation and serving. However, even if you can only commit to 2 to 3 hours, your help would still be appreciated. Training, along with lunch and/or morning tea, will be provided.

To become a Canteen Volunteer, please reach out to Lisa Hooley (Canteen Manager) at 4754 2822. A current Working with Children Check is necessary.

4754 2822

Winmalee High School



CAREERS NOTICEBOARD

For student career opportunities, please see the Careers Google Classroom.
Code: yr6hpo2

More information is also available on the school website [Careers page](#).

The next *Science at the Local* on 8 March features **WHS Alumni!!**



New Voices, New Futures

Celebrating International Women's Day with early-career research and young women beginning their science journeys.

**Rewilding the Microbiome:
A New Approach to Seahorse Conservation**

Mia Leach, USYD

**From Student to Stony Desert:
First Lessons in Kowari Conservation**

Nina J. Manning, ANU



8 MARCH @ 2:00 PM
Springwood Sports Club (Bowlo)
www.scienceatthelocal.org



Best wishes,

Winmalee High School

WHS ALUMNI Q&A



class of
Stacey Sheather '95

WHAT HAVE YOU BEEN UP TO SINCE GRADUATING FROM WHS?

After leaving school in 1995, I spent five years with the Royal Australian Air Force working in telecommunications before moving to Services Australia, where I dedicated 23 years to service delivery for our communities, as well as family law and policy work. Approximately 18 months ago, I transitioned to the Australian Competition and Consumer Commission, where I am now the Assistant Director of the First Nations team within the Consumer Affairs Trading branch. In this role, I focus on coordination, advocacy, and outreach for First Nations Australians at a national level. While I value these professional achievements, my greatest joy and accomplishment remain being a mother to four beautiful daughters and a grandmother to two wonderful grandchildren.

HOW DID YOUR TIME AT WHS INFLUENCE OR HELP YOU DISCOVER YOUR PASSIONS AND INTERESTS?

My time at Winmalee High School played an important role in shaping my interests and values. It was there that I developed a strong sense of discipline, teamwork, and resilience — qualities that became the foundation of my career in public service. The encouragement I received from teachers and peers helped me build confidence and discover a passion for serving others. Looking back, the experiences and connections I made at Winmalee helped me to see the importance of community, responsibility, and leadership — values that continue to inspire me today.

WHAT ARE SOME OF YOUR FAVOURITE MEMORIES FROM YOUR TIME AT WHS?

Some of my favourite memories from Winmalee High School are without a doubt the people and the friendships I formed — many of which I still treasure and remain connected to today. The moments that stand out most include the excitement of the Year 11 ski trip, the creativity sparked in art with Mr. Bond, and the lessons and laughter from English with Mr. Aldwinkle. These experiences not only made school enjoyable but also left me with lasting connections and lessons that I carry with me.

DO YOU HAVE A BUSINESS INSTAGRAM OR WEBSITE THAT YOU WOULD BE HAPPY FOR US TO SHARE?

www.accc.gov.au

WHAT EXTRACURRICULAR ACTIVITIES WERE YOU INVOLVED IN AT SCHOOL?

I loved playing netball and representing the school, which gave me a strong sense of teamwork and pride. Debating was another passion of mine, and I found my footing in it quite quickly — an experience that not only boosted my confidence but also gave me skills in communication and advocacy that have carried through into my career in public service.

WHAT DO YOU THINK MAKES OUR SCHOOL SPECIAL?

Over the years, I've had the privilege of experiencing Winmalee High School not only as a student but also as a parent, with all four of my daughters either having gone through or still attending the school. What makes Winmalee truly special is the dedication and care shown by its leadership and staff — from principals like Mr. Bebe and Mr. Lawless to the most recent, Ms. Facas, along with all the deputies and teachers who consistently invest so much into their students. Their commitment has created a nurturing environment where young people are encouraged to grow, achieve, and feel part of a strong community.





Australian
Air League

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NSW Group

NSW GROUP IS NOW ENROLLING



Since 1934 the Australian Air League has been teaching young boys and girls nationwide all about aviation, while helping them develop important life skills like leadership, discipline, self confidence and teamwork. When you join the league you will make new friends and take part in fun and exciting activities, on the ground and in the air.

Each week you will attend your local squadron where you will learn valuable skills and take part in fun and interesting activities and classes. Some of our classes include Meteorology, Navigation, Photography and Community Service. Squadrons also attend training camps, sport and recreational days, flying experiences and ceremonial drill.

We welcome boys and girls from the age of 8 years old from all different cultures and backgrounds. Parents and families are welcome to support or even join their local squadron as a volunteer. All adult members and volunteers are Working with Children Checked.

The Australian Air League is running both a fun and educational programme that is making fine citizens out of our young Australians.

**FOR MORE INFORMATION ON THE AUSTRALIAN AIR
LEAGUE AND YOUR CLOSEST SQUADRON
PLEASE CONTACT**

Email: development.nsw@airleague.com.au

www.airleague.com.au

