



WINMALEE HIGH SCHOOL

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Term 1 Week 7 Communication – Thursday 12 March 2026

Dear Parents and Carers,

Warami.

It was a great turn out at **Science at the Local** on Sunday afternoon at the Springwood Sports Club. Hearing our former students speaking about the work they have been doing was nothing short of inspiring. Mia Leach spoke about her honours research on the endangered, Australian white seahorse and Nina Manning spoke about her time working with the unique native Australian animal, the Kowari. It was an engaging afternoon.



A special shout out to Mr Kevin Joseph, who is one of the organisers of Science at the Local. He has been leading this work for many years, and as a community we are lucky to have Mr Joseph as a teacher at Winmalee High!



On Monday a group of students from Years 8 – 11 attended **an International Women's Day** event delivered by the Springwood Neighbourhood centre. We would like to thank organisers Rosemary Bishop and Tonje Akerholt for their work in putting on this event. It was lovely to connect with students from other Blue Mountains public high schools. Students wore recycled or preloved clothing to mark the day, acknowledging the impact that fast fashion has on women around the world.



Thank you to the families that attended our **Year 7 Meet the Teacher** event on Tuesday evening. The weather was kind, with blue skies and no rain. It was a genuinely lovely evening making connections with families and we appreciate your time. If you couldn't attend, we would appreciate you completing a [short transition survey](#) for us when you have a couple of minutes.



NAPLAN - Today, Year 7 and 9 students successfully completed their NAPLAN Writing test, after the technical issues experienced on Wednesday. Both year groups were excellent with following instructions and putting in a strong effort to complete the test.

It is also worth noting effort and patience shown by our Year 9 on Wednesday morning. Before the interruption, students were working solidly and were typing away diligently. We appreciate how they approached the challenges presented on Wednesday. Fortunately, they were able to pick up where they left off yesterday.

The schedule for Year 7 remains unchanged, apart from this morning's Writing test. Year 9 students will receive their new schedule this afternoon. A copy will also be emailed home to Year 9 families.

Read on for lots of sport news, showcasing the broad range of competitions that students have been involved in!



Australian MTB Interschools 2026 Competition

Well done to **Ethan Konwerski** (Year 8) **Ari Read** (Year 7) and **Bobby Smoth** (Year 10), who proudly represented our school at the Australian Interschools Mountain Biking competition in Thredbo last week. Racing in very challenging wet and muddy conditions, the three riders took on the Downhill, Flow, Pump Track and All Mountain events with determination and resilience. Each rider put in a strong performance across the different disciplines and showed great effort, skill and sportsmanship throughout the competition. Congratulations to Ethan, Ari and Bobby on a fantastic effort on the mountain.

Bib numbers: 424 Bobby, 709 Ari, 862 Ethan.

Flag Football - A big congratulations to **Dexter Pachinger** (Year 9), for his Flag Football success. After training in Riverwood 2-3 times a week in 2026, Dexter competed for NSW at the National Championships at Blacktown on the weekend of 7th- 8th March. The NSW U15 boys finished second to Qld in a 'State of Origin' grand final. A bonus for Dexter who was awarded the NSW MVP of the tournament! As Flag Football is a growing and future Olympic sport, we look forward to following Dexter's journey!



Well done to those who competed at the Nepean **Zone Swimming Carnival** on Tuesday Week 6. We dodged the rain to have a fantastic day of racing and competition, with our swimmers performing well, with many progressing to Sydney West Championships next week. A huge thank you, as well, to **Evie Mann, Eydie Peake, Piper Meek, Alannah Collins** and **Eva Melville** (Year 10). Blaxland High and Winmalee High organise the Zone Swimming Carnival, and these PASS students were fantastic in their assistance of students, teachers and parents alike!





Well done to **Lucy Gleeson Frater** (Year 10), who, in Week 4 represented the **Nepean Zone Open Girls Basketball** team at the Sydney West Championships. Lucy and the Nepean Zone team performed strongly throughout the team, with the girls making the grand final in a competitive field. Straight after the competition, Lucy travelled to Jamison HS to help the school knockout team to a successful Round 1 win away- then she went to club that night. All up, Lucy played about 8 games of basketball that day!

Knockout Sport Hitting the Ground Running!

Congratulations to the 60-plus students who have already taken the field/court, representing Winmalee in a Knockout Sport! Our Facebook page will often give more details, but so far, our results have been great, and our sportsmanship has been elite! Some results are below, with many more to come.

Open Girls Basketball (pictured): R1 win over Jamison, R2 win over Castle Hill: 37-30.

Open Boys Basketball: R1 win over Cambridge Park, R2 win over Model Farms 40-37.



Boys Cricket: Loss against Greystanes on Tuesday.

Boys Football (Soccer): R1 win over Nepean HS.

Girls Touch Football: R1 win over Springwood, R2 11-0 win over Penrith HS.

Boys Volleyball (pictured): R1 Bye, R2 win over Cambridge Park 2 sets to 0.

Girls Volleyball: R1 loss to Katoomba, 2-1.



Sport is more than just the players and we congratulate **Kiraleigh Brest, Trinity Bunter** and **Ryder Miller** in Year 8.

These students were part of a larger group that took up an opportunity to complete an NRL Referee Training Course, hosted at Winmalee by NRL staff with both theory and practical units. Then, and on a day with pouring rain at Jamison Park, the Year 8 team helped the NRL by refereeing a primary school rugby league gala day, putting their skills in action and being cited as having significant potential. Great work team!

What are you reading?... Student Book Reviews

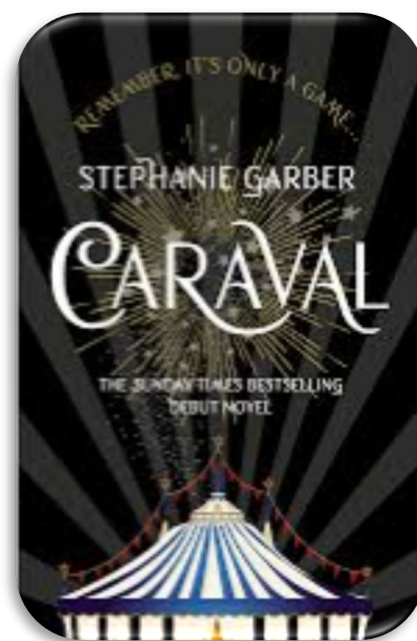
Please enjoy a book review by one of our Year 8 students.

Caraval by author, Stephanie Garber.

Caraval is a highly recommended book featuring two sisters, Scarlett who is supposedly marrying Count Nicolas d'Arcy, a man she has only ever corresponded with, but has never actually met, and Donatella (referred to as Tella), the youngest sister.

Scarlett is supposed to marry in 10 days in hopes it will save her and her sister from their abusive father. They then come to the conclusion that if they don't leave now, they will never see Caraval, a high stakes, performance game.

I would highly recommend this book to anyone who enjoys reading romance, fiction novels. I give this book a 5 out of 5!



For the latest student career opportunities please check out our [Careers page](#) and read the latest Careers Bulletin.

🎓 WHS Alumni Spotlight: Deborah Sheely (Clarke) (Class of 2003)

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 **Deborah Sheely (Clarke)** shares her reflections on her time at Winmalee High and where life has taken her since.

Check out Deborah'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.

Best wishes,

Winmalee High School

Careers Bulletin

Term 1, Week 7 2026

Opportunities:

Australian Federal Police – Protective Service Officer online Info Session

On the 19th of March, join the AFP for an online session – gain insights into the role of a protective service officer (PSO), hear first-hand experiences, and discover what it means to do legendary work in the AFP. Find out more [HERE](#)

Work Experience at the Australian Museum

The Australian Museum's high school work experience program offers students the chance to explore a variety of careers including science and cultural research, education, public programming, curatorial and exhibition design, marketing, communications and corporate services. The program is available for students in Years 10–12. Find out more [HERE](#)

Australian Geography Competition

The Australian Geography Competition is a contest for Australian secondary school students, assessing their geographical knowledge and skills. The Competition aims to encourage student interest in geography and to reward student excellence. Find out more [HERE](#)



Cyber Spotlight: Careers in Finance!

Chartered Accountant

Chartered Accountants display exceptional thinking and a superior grasp of business that truly marks them as unique in the marketplace. They work at some of the highest levels in business as chief financial officers, CEO's, senior managers and partners of some of the world's largest companies. Check out a YouTube video [HERE](#) for more info!

Finance Broker

Finance Brokers conduct lending transactions on behalf of clients and offer credit assistance for their panel of lenders. Check out a YouTube video [HERE](#) for more info!

Defence Force Work Experience

The Defence Work Experience Program provides young Australians interested in Defence as a future career, the opportunity to sample life in Defence and learn more about the Australian Defence Force (ADF) and the Australian Public Service (APS). Get more info [HERE](#)

For Seniors:



UNSW Arts, Design & Architecture Information Evening

Thinking about a career in Arts, Design & Architecture? Discover what's possible at UNSW's Arts, Design & Architecture Information Evening – designed especially for current Year 12 students and anyone considering studying an undergraduate degree at UNSW. Join a faculty ranked Top 50 globally, with two Schools in the Top 25 worldwide* – including #1 in Australia for Social Sciences and #1 in Sydney for Architecture & Built Environment.

Western Sydney University Senior High School Yr 12 Student Info Hub

One of the most prestigious scholarships in Australia. The program has a focus on giving back to Australia and is the only one of its kind that nurtures Scholars to fulfil their broader community ambitions over and above the pursuit of an undergraduate degree.

Each year we award 25 Scholarships and offer talented and motivated students the opportunity to realise their potential by providing financial support, personal enrichment and development opportunities. Apply before 9 April, find out more [HERE](#)

Charles Sturt University - Medicine Info Night 2026

1 April

Pursue a rewarding career. Make a difference in your community. Get all the info you need to study our independently accredited Bachelor of Clinical Science (Medicine)/Doctor of Medicine. Whether you're in high school, looking for a career change or keen to take the next step in your health career – our online information night is for you! Parents, carers and career advisers are also welcome to join. Find out more [HERE](#)

UNSW Health Sciences & Optometry Information Evening

Interested in shaping the future of health? Start your health career at one of the best medicine and health schools in the world*. Designed for current Year 12 students, this online session will introduce our Vision Science and Optometry programs alongside health science degrees in pharmacy, physiotherapy, exercise science, exercise physiology and dietetics & food innovation. You will gain insights into UNSW Medicine and Health's interdisciplinary learning experience and industry connection opportunities for our students. 22 April – find out more [HERE](#)

Coming Up at School – Beyond Year 12 Talks

We will be launching a series of talks this year with a focus on life beyond year 12. These talks will include in-depth sessions on apprenticeships and traineeships, full time employment, and university pathways. Job Network Agencies, and recruitment personnel from various industries will come to speak to students about the possibilities beyond Year 12. Information will be distributed closer to the dates of various talks via Daily Notices in Roll Call, Year Meetings and the Careers Google Classroom page. Our first talk will be Wednesday, week 9, and will focus on University Pathways, including non-ATAR options and Early Entry schemes.

WHS ALUMNI Q&A



Deborah Sheely
(Clarke) class of 03

WHAT HAVE YOU BEEN UP TO SINCE GRADUATING FROM WHS?

I've done many different things since leaving school. I own a landscaping and property maintenance business in my small rural town of Gloucester as well as working as a retained firefighter for FRNSW.

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

I particularly remember my design and tech teacher. Initially we butted heads, but her perseverance helped change my attitude and I feel school was more successful for me because of it.

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

I really enjoyed doing the Duke of Edinburgh program as well as the Year 10 snow trip.

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

www.gloucesterlandscapes.com.au

WHAT EXTRACURRICULAR ACTIVITIES WERE YOU INVOLVED IN AT SCHOOL?

Duke of Ed.

WHAT DO YOU THINK MAKES OUR SCHOOL SPECIAL?

The beautiful bush location and open spaces.

