



WINMALEE HIGH SCHOOL

High School Drive, Winmalee NSW 2777  WinmaleeHighSchool-Official
T 02 4754 2822 F 02 4754 3280 winmalee-h.school@det.nsw.edu.au
<https://winmalee-h.schools@nsw.gov.au>

Dear Parents, Carers and Students,

Sorry this is such a long letter! We are keeping you informed and there is so much to consider as we move into this next phase of school operations. We recommend a cup of coffee or tea as you sit down to read this.

Students who need to attend school

Our doors remain open to parents and carers who cannot make the choice to keep their child at home. The school will provide minimal supervision to support parents and carers who provide essential services. If your child attends school, they will meet at the hall for roll call each morning and will be organised into small groups each day.

Students will be supervised to complete the work packages that all students have received. The canteen will not be open and students will need to bring their own food. The vending machines will be available. There will be no extracurricular activities. Bus services will continue to run.

For Year 11 and 12 students, there may be occasions where students will need to attend school, even if they are studying at home: like completing a major work project for the HSC, or possibly collecting and returning back study materials. We will provide more detailed advice on the following page for Year 11 and 12 students, in particular advice on the HSC.

Attendance notes and explanations

Text messages for absences will not be sent until further notice. If you have notified the school that you are self-isolating prior to the advice from Government, or you have since notified us that you are choosing to follow the advice, you do not need to provide any further information to the school about your child's attendance.

If you have not been able to notify us of your choice to keep your child/children at home, you can send an email or a Skoolbag message to us.

Whilst we are on the topic of notifying the school, on behalf of the school, can we please extend our gratitude and thanks for all of the supportive messages from families that have been received. It has been truly heart-warming to feel that support from the community. Thank you.

What is remote learning?

Since we have been responding to issues surrounding COVID-19, the term online learning has been used a lot. At Winmalee High, we would like to refer to how we will be working as remote learning. Online learning suggests that students must be at a device or on a computer to complete all learning tasks. We are very mindful that technology will support access to resources for learning and be a vital communication tool for us as we move through this very uncertain journey. However, we will be working hard to provide opportunities for students to move beyond their screens and learn in different ways.



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As we plan further, we will provide a range of suggestions that encourage projects, activities and collaboration with others who are also in the home so that students can engage in a range of experiences. At this point we want to emphasise that remote learning should facilitate physical activity, communication skills, relationship building, skill building in different areas and most importantly wellbeing.

What to expect from students when they are working remotely from home?

This is new to all of us, so we need to be flexible, understanding and supportive for our students. As a school staff, we are also learning fast and looking at new ways that we can remain connected with our students and support them to continue their learning remotely.

We are all uncertain how long this may impact us all, and the wellbeing of our students is a priority. Maintaining the wellbeing of students (and parents and carers) by finding the right balance for school work, household routines and family based activities is important. Our students learn at different paces, have strengths and weaknesses in various subjects and have things they love to do and things they dislike. Engaging students can be challenging and you as families will be spending a lot of time together – teaching and living with students is not an easy task!

So our advice is, try and get your child to roughly follow their timetable in that they might spend time working on 2-3 subjects a day. If shared computer time is limited, you might schedule time for each child to access any new information on Google Classroom, note down instructions, ask their teachers any questions, and complete a task on Maths Online or Literacy Planet (Year 7-9).

There is no expectation that all work that is provided must be finished and submitted. If it is an assessable or submittable task, teachers will make this clear in their instructions. Please note that teachers will respond to enquiries and questions from students in order to support their learning. These responses will generally occur in a timely manner but will not necessarily be immediate or after school hours/on weekends. It is important that students also have realistic expectations of teachers who will be working with 5-6 classes.

We hope that your child can spend time with the family by doing things such as, helping you around the house, assisting with preparing lunch or dinner, playing board games with you, listening to a podcast together, gardening, physical exercise or doing something fun that you all enjoy.

The Learning Hub and student learning support

Learning support through the learning hub will continue with adjustments. For students who are undertaking any Life Skills subjects, there is a separate Google Classroom set up for students to access work. Please refer to the Year Group sheet for the code to access these resources.

Mrs Shad and Ms Hinchey-Holley, as well as the Student Support Learning Officers, will be available to support students with their learning. Students who have previously had regular Hub bookings will be supported. What this looks like will develop over the next few days, as we determine which platform is best suited to allow for video conferencing to allow teacher/student conversations to support learning. The Wellbeing staff will be in contact with students and families.



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Department of Education Resources

Available on the Department's website is information about [Learning from home](#). This has information on delivery of learning and advice for parents and carers.

There are also some great [Teaching and Learning resources](#) available on the Department's website for each key learning area.

Access to computers, printers, scanner

As mentioned, access to computers will form a vital part of student access to learning resources and communication with the school. We understand that this may be a barrier for some families. We ask that if you are concerned about access to a computer for your child, or you do not have internet connection, please complete [this quick survey](#) so we can find a way to support your child's learning at home.

The school will be working to provide any families with no computer access, a school device for the duration of working remotely. Students who have no access to a device and senior students will be the priority in the first instance. We will then see what resources we can allocate to provide access to an additional computer for families that have more than one child needing to access learning and only one device. We encourage you to complete the survey so we can identify need and distribute the resources we have as fairly and equitably as possible.

There are several good scanning apps available, which make it easier for students to use their phone to send completed work to their teachers. These include Jot Not Pro, Office Lens and Photo Scan.

If students need to access the work on Google Classroom or another platform and they do not yet have access to a computer or the internet, please contact the school to request a paper package. See the final page for details of the appropriate contact person. Students or parents can collect paperwork through the front office after it has been requested.

The School library

Our Teacher Librarian, Mrs Vassallo will be available to support students with access to resources as well as borrowing books. Please see the information we have included on accessing the library catalogue. Students can email Mrs Vassallo with titles they would like to borrow and these will be bundled ready for collection through the front office. There are also 100+ titles available for students to download onto a device at home.

There is also information on accessing Britannica online. The user and password for Winmalee High Students is included.

Year Advisers and the School Counsellor

The school recognises that student wellbeing is important to maintain during this period. As a Positive Education school, we will work to ensure that students are supported and a sense of community is maintained. More information will follow but please be assured that Year Advisers and Deputy Principals will continue to work to support students.



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The School counselling service will still be operating via phone and email. The need for face to face interviews will be reviewed on a case by case basis. Please find our counsellor contact details and itinerary is below;

Louise Pratt - louise.pratt3@det.nsw.edu.au

Monday	Tuesday	Wednesday	Thursday	Friday
Winmalee HS 4754 2822	Winmalee HS 4754 2822	Odd Weeks Winmalee PS Even Weeks Winmalee HS	Winmalee PS 4754 1574	Winmalee HS 4754 2822

Headspace Penrith are also offering an online service.

You can contact them by calling (02) 4720 8800 or emailing headspacepenrith@parramattamission.org.au Monday to Friday 9am to 5pm.

For after-hours support you can call:

Mental Health Telephone Access Line - 1800 011 511

Suicide Call Back Service - 1300 659 467

Kids Helpline - 1800 55 1800

Lifeline - 13 11 14

Further advice on **student wellbeing** can also be found on the Department's website – an outline is provided below:

Being confined to home for an extended period of time can cause stress and conflict. Tips for looking after your children during isolation include:

- Talking to your whole family about what is happening. Understanding the situation will reduce their anxiety.
- Help your children to think about how they have coped with difficult situations in the past and reassure them that they will cope with this situation too. Remind them that the isolation won't last for long.
- Exercise regularly. Options could include exercise DVDs, dancing, floor exercises, yoga, walking around the backyard or using home exercise equipment, such as a stationary bicycle, if you have it. Exercise is a proven treatment for stress and depression.
- Encourage your children to keep in touch with family members and friends via telephone, email or social media (where appropriate).



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Communication

Students should access their Department email regularly, to receive information and updates. The school will continue communicate with parents and carers regularly.

The school is working on confirming which video conferencing platform we will use to communicate with students for supporting teaching and learning, group meetings and more ambitiously school assemblies.

Social Media Distancing!

Social media can be a useful tool for young people to stay connected with their friends. Monitoring screen time and social media use is more important now than ever. Students will need continued guidance to respond appropriately to their peers in a range of situations and we encourage families to be aware of which platforms students are using and to have regular conversations about social media activity.

Digital Citizenship

Learning remotely can involve participation in online classroom chats or other types of posting. All interactions must be in line with our school Positive Behaviour for Learning (PBL) guidelines which foster Safe and Respectful Learners. Our electronic policy and expectations around safe use of technology still apply to our students.

TAFE

Please find below information regarding TAFE NSW TVET delivery:

- TAFE NSW will continue delivery whilst schools are still open
- Some classes may be able to move to online delivery if capability, appropriate resources and student access permits
- Students can contact Mrs Ruskin cheryll.ruskin@det.nsw.edu.au for further clarification
- NESAs is reviewing the impact of Coronavirus COVID-19 on TVET delivery

Year 12 Students and the HSC

Please see our separate communication to be provided later today regarding information for Year 12. This will include new advice from NESAs, which can be [viewed on their website](#).

School Fees

At this point in time, we would request that any fee payments are placed on hold and that no payments are made, except for fees for Mathematics, which contributes to a Maths Online subscription for every student and for Year 8 English which contributes to a Literacy Planet subscription for Year 8 students.

There will be further advice on fees, in particular on fees for consumables already paid, depending on the length of time students will be working remotely.



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Equipment collection

We will be looking at ways in which other equipment and resources can be collected from the school, such as musical instruments, art packs and Visual Arts diaries, workbooks, etc. We will let you know when we have a coordinated plan to enable for safe collection of materials and resources.

Contacts for Support

Issue	Who to Contact	Email Address
Student Department email logins and passwords	Mr Kraus / Mrs Vassallo	hans.krause@det.nsw.edu.au julie.vassallo@det.nsw.edu.au
MathsOnLine password	Mrs Jones	Rachel.jones31@det.nsw.edu.au
Literacy Planet passwords (7-9 only)	Mrs Jones	Rachel.jones31@det.nsw.edu.au
Borrowing Library books	Narelle Hill	Narelle.hill@det.nsw.edu.au
Work packs (paper copies) for Year 7	Mrs Jones	Rachel.jones31@det.nsw.edu.au
Work packs (paper copies) for Year 8	Mrs Darby	Nicole.darby6@det.nsw.edu.au
Work packs (paper copies) for Year 9	Julie Younan	Julie.younan3@det.nsw.edu.au
Work packs (paper copies) for Year 10	Julie Younan	Julie.younan3@det.nsw.edu.au
Learning and Support/Learning Hub	Ms Hinchey-Holley/Mrs Shead	Bree.hinchey-holley@det.nsw.edu.au Karen.shead@det.nsw.edu.au
All other inquiries can be directed to the school email address and your question will be directed to the relevant staff member	Winmalee High School	Winmalee-h.school@det.nsw.edu.au

Thank you to all families – to those working from home while keeping their children at home, those working to deliver essential services, especially health care workers, those who are facing uncertainty with work as further restrictions are put in place, those who are also teachers who have children at home and to all of our students for their cooperation and commitment to our school under really challenging circumstances.

Best wishes from the entire Winmalee High School Team (school office and school administration staff, canteen staff, cleaners, casual teachers and teachers).

25 March 2020