



WINMALEE HIGH

COMMUNITY NEWSLETTER



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WORLD'S GREATEST SHAVE SUCCESS!

A message from the relieving Principal

Dear parents and carers,

As we are in the last week of term, we see a further easing of restrictions across the state and in schools. We have been able to host parents at various school events recently, and the good news is that it looks like it will continue! Hopefully not too many holiday plans are thwarted by the situation up north and in Queensland.

This term the school has been proud of the achievements of our students. In the classroom, on the sporting field, in the water, in external programs, on camps and in various teams, our students continue to shine. It has been a jam packed term of success with a well deserved break on the horizon.

Congratulations in particular to our Student Representative Council (SRC) and coordinator, Mrs Sheehy, for their strong leadership and passion. Their support of the World's Greatest Shave was inspirational.



The World's Greatest Shave

As a school community \$21,287.63 was raised. This year, this event had even more significance for our school, as we sadly lost one of our students to Leukemia in 2020. The courage and generosity of many students and staff who shaved for a cure or donated their hair was inspirational. Students supported the bake sale, the crazy hair initiative and the entire fundraiser with such good spirit. A special thank you must also go out to our parents and volunteer hairdressers Bronwyn Hawes, Christina Murphy, Kirstie Rehutai and also barbers from The Cave at Winmalee. We couldn't have done it without them. On behalf of everyone who was involved, thank you for your contribution to this fundraiser. A shout out to all of those who shaved and donated hair - go Team Winmalee!



This term we have been busy finalising our Strategic Improvement Plan and we would like to share with you a video summary of our plan, its 3 Strategic Directions and the initiatives within each area. Thank you to Year 8 students Claudia Thomas, Will Cusack, Tahlia McGown, Abbie Rose Whale, Evie Bullock and Oscar Stone for their support in preparing this video presentation for our school community. The video can be [viewed online](#). The plan will be available on the school's website from Term 1.



At our most recent P&C meeting we had guest speaker Ryn Vlachou, Community Development Officer from Blue Mountains City Council present [findings from the Blue Mountains Planet Youth project](#). The P&C were very interested to understand some of the local data from the Blue Mountains and would like to encourage further conversations as a school community around supporting our young people with drug and alcohol use, particularly for our senior students who are socialising at parties on weekends. The P&C raised concerns about adults providing alcohol to students at weekend parties and the committee are taking a strong stance against such behaviour, which is criminally negligent. The P&C would like to work with the school to support a reset of the culture of alcohol consumption at parties to keep our young people safe. We encourage you to have a look at the presentation. We hope to be able to host a parent evening later this year on the Planet Youth project.

Wishing everyone a safe and relaxing Easter break.

Voula Facas, Relieving Principal

Student Support Officer

\$88.4 million is being invested over the next four years to provide every public high school in NSW with a full-time school counselling allocation, as well as a full-time Student Support Officer. This initiative will support student access mental health and wellbeing support. In Semester 2, Winmalee High School will be allocated a Student Support Officer (SSOs). The job advertisement for these positions has now been published.

What does an SSO do? Take a look at this [video of an SSO](#) working at Sir Joseph Banks High School in Revesby. In this video, she shares her experiences as an SSO and encourages others to join the profession.

The positions are being shared via [I work for NSW](#).



Ms Tippet supports students as our Anti-Racism Contact Officer and also as our Girls Adviser. Below is some information about Harmony Day and how the Department's and school's policies aim to uphold the values of equality for all.

Harmony Week celebrates Australia's cultural diversity. At Winmalee High School we celebrate and promote inclusiveness, respect and a sense of belonging for all students and staff, from the traditional custodians of the land to those who have come from countries around the world. Harmony Week occurs in March each year and includes the United Nations' International Day for the Elimination of Racial Discrimination.

The ongoing theme of Harmony Week is 'everyone belongs' highlighting cultural respect for all and learning and understanding how all Australians equally belong to this nation.

Diversity: The LGBTQ+ support network is for anyone who identifies as lesbian, gay, bisexual, transgender, queer or non-binary and wants to connect with others in a supportive environment. The support network is also open to any students wishing to support their LGBTQ+ friends and peers. The network is facilitated by Dr Emily Burns (English faculty) and is designed to foster a culture of acceptance, inclusion and support for sexual and gender diverse students and their peers at Winmalee High School.

Support:

Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islanders (ATSI): The NSW Department of Education is committed to improving the educational outcomes and wellbeing of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander students. The strength, diversity, ownership and richness of Aboriginal cultures and Custodianship of Country are respected, valued and promoted. Winmalee High School's ATSI mentor and support group is facilitated by Ms Kristie Robson (PD/H/PE faculty). Specific mentor and support initiatives and programs explicitly catering to ATSI students' interests and needs are an integral commitment and component of our school.

Anti-Racism Contact Officer (ARCO): The NSW Department of Education is committed to the elimination of all forms of racial discrimination in NSW government schools. All schools are required to have a trained Anti-Racism Contact Officer who assists parents, staff and students who have complaints regarding racism and facilitates the complaints handling process. Winmalee High School's ARCO is Ms Ros Tippet (English faculty).

Students are encouraged to contact the facilitators for support and further referral if required. All facilitators have undertaken appropriate training as per department policy and procedures and support groups are facilitated with executive guidance in alignment with the NSW Department of Education.

School Uniform Update

The Year 7-12 **Alpine jacket (puffer jacket)** is anticipated to be available for purchase from Term 2, Week 2, just in time for the cooler weather. Many students have been asking about their arrival and are looking forward to this new uniform item. Students, staff and the P&C have supported a **new school tracksuit pant** which should be available in our uniform shop by June. They are a unisex, everyday, all purpose track pant. They are made from a grey stretch micro-fibre fabric, lined with a soft brush cotton and have an elastic waist with draw string. Students who have tried them on are happy with the warmth and comfort they provide.

Until these items arrive, students can wear jumpers which are plain maroon for juniors or plain black for seniors, with no logos. The current school sport track pants can also be worn as a warmer option.

Any students who need any support with uniform, please do not hesitate to ask. We have a range of second hand uniform available and we can provide student assistance for purchase of uniform items. The uniform shop continues to be open Monday, Wednesday and Thursday each week from 8am-11am.

SMOKING/VAPING CONCERNS

Last week, we communicated some information regarding the use of e-cigarettes in schools. The Department of Education has provided some clear advice on the use of e-cigarettes and vaping for school students. There has been concern state wide about the increase in young people using e-cigarettes. At school it has been made clear that the use of e-cigarettes/vapes is prohibited at school, on public transport and whilst waiting for public transport. Students using e-cigarettes at school will be managed under the school's discipline policy. Below is some additional information.

Smoking, which now includes the use of electronic cigarettes (vaping) has been prohibited on all school premises and in administrative areas since July 1988. Smoking/vaping is also prohibited at all public transport stops and stations in NSW and on transport to and from school.

Electronic cigarettes (E-cigarettes) can contain high levels of nicotine. Adolescence is a critical period for brain development and exposure to nicotine can have long-term health consequences, impacting memory, attention and learning.

E-cigarettes are often available in different flavours which can be appealing to young people and may expose them to chemicals and toxins such as formaldehyde, heavy metals, particulate matter and flavouring chemicals, at levels that have the potential to cause adverse health effects.

Second-hand smoke exposure can cause disease and premature death in children and adults who do not smoke. Specifically children exposed to second-hand smoke experience a range of upper and lower respiratory illnesses and symptoms such as colds and flu, cough, phlegm production, wheezing and pneumonia.

We will continue to take appropriate opportunities to promote the Department's policy on smoking on school premises. We will also report any breaches of outdoor smoking bans to NSW Health via an online form [found here](#).

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Your support

There are ways you can help protect your children. These include:

- Talking to your child about why smoking/vaping are harmful for them. It is never too late to have the conversation
- Learning about the different types of e-cigarettes available and the risks associated with using these products
- Setting a good example by being tobacco free
- Reporting those who are selling cigarettes and e-cigarettes to minors. You can do this by completing the online reporting [form](#) or calling the Tobacco Information Line on 1800 357 412.

Helpful resources

You may find the below resources helpful when talking with your child:

<https://www.icanquit.com.au/reasons-to-quit/smoking-and-your-family/what-if-your-child-smokes>

<https://www.health.nsw.gov.au/tobacco/Pages/default.aspx>

<https://www.health.nsw.gov.au/tobacco/Pages/e-cigarette-young-people.aspx>

Please contact the school if you have any particular concerns for your child.



STATEMENT OF *Intent*

Last week, the Department of Education co-signed a statement of intent. This statement is about the role of schools in strengthening children and young people's understanding of consent, and preventing and responding to sexual assault and sexual violence among young people.

Last week on assembly, our Year 12 leaders spoke to students about the matters that have been raised in the media, including the alarming statistics regarding sexual harassment, assault and violence. Our Girls' Adviser, Ms Tippet has met with Year 10, 11 and 12 girls to provide further support and speak to students about the ways in which we can positively move forward and start courageous, but respectful conversations so that everyone can work together. Ms Cameron and Mr Pendergast, Deputy Principals, will be speaking to our young men also, to provide support and guidance.

We encourage all students to seek support and advice from a trusted adult if they are concerned about themselves or others. There is a heightened awareness relating to healthy relationship and consent at this time and we will continue to provide opportunities for our students to engage in productive dialogue, which promotes understanding and respect. The school does not condone students taking matters into their own hands, confronting others or approaching these topics with aggression.

The [Statement of Intent](#) can be viewed on the Department's website.

Thank you P&C and Trish Doyle, MP

New School Volley Ball Court!

Last year the Winmalee High P&C applied for a joint funding Community Building Partnerships Grant through our local member, Ms Trish Doyle, MP. This grant was to refurbish our school volley ball courts. Due to COVID-19 border closures, this project was delayed and has only recently been completed.

This new asset to our school (pictured below) has further improved the school grounds for student use during sport, in PE lessons and breaks.

We would like to sincerely thank Ms Trish Doyle MP, local member for the Blue Mountains for her support in this joint funding application and also P&C Secretary, Ms Belinda Sell, for her work in completing and submitting the application, resulting in the successful grant. These joint partnerships in funding make it possible for our school to further improve resources for our students and we deeply value this support.



Taekwondo

Winmalee High School's Taekwondo Team, the Wasps, has been training since early in Term One and has had several enthusiastic new students join the team. There are currently 24 students training in the team. Four of the new students, from Year 7, have recently completed their first official grading in Taekwondo. The four students, Tillie Miller, Miller Lackey, Joshua Moulton and Alice Pigram, all graded from beginner White Belts up to Yellow Belts. The students were graded by Master Andrew Johnston, from Wolves Martial Arts. The students gave a very strong and controlled performance at the external grading.



The Wasps team at Winmalee High School trains throughout the year for the specific purpose of entering a team in the NSW All School's Taekwondo Championships. This is a full contact martial arts sparring competition. The team is trained by Mr Verstegen who is also a Head Instructor at Wolves Martial Arts. New students are welcome to see Mr Verstegen in Science for more information if they also wish to train with the team.

Students in the Spotlight

Thank you to all student leaders on Expo Day and also to **Lauren Bailey, Sam McGrath, William Garrett, Oscar Atkins, Zoe Weissner, Will O'Connell, Lacey Bowman** and **Isobel Windsor** for hosting parents at our Year 6 into 7 information evening. These students did a tremendous job in showcasing our school by being their wonderful and talented selves. Their leadership and service to the school is appreciated.

Oscar Atkins (Year 12 Prefect) - Oscar competed in the CHS (Combined High Schools) championship in Softball for Sydney West and placed third in the tournament. He has recently been nominated as Captain of the team! Congratulations Oscar on your commitment to softball at this high level.

Will Sherwood (Year 12) was successful in the Sydney West Golf trials and will compete in Batemen's Bay this coming May. We look forward to celebrating Will's future success as a talented golfer.

Joshua Craig, Madeleine Eneberg (Year 11) **Lili Baran** (Year 10) have all been selected for the NSW State Wind Ensemble and State Wind Orchestra. These students rehearse weekly at the Arts Unit in Lewisham on a Monday evening. A big commitment to represent our school at a state level. Congratulations.

Charlie Kolega (Year 11) and **Max Jackson** (Year 10) have both been selected to be a part of the NSW State Senior Drama Ensemble. This is an outstanding achievement and we look forward to seeing performances from these talented Drama students.

Belle Hirst (Year 11) is playing a role in a Musical showing in the school holidays called 'Bakery Hill'. Belle continues to excel in the performing arts and is currently juggling a lead role in our school musical and this external production - congratulations, Belle.

Tilly Becker (Year 10) gained a competitive place in the Nepean Hospital Health Inspirations program. Congratulations to Tilly on her selection for this program. Tilly was away on this placement during Week 9 and she loved the experience.

Evie Bullock (Year 8) - Ms Facas had the pleasure of speaking with Evie recently about her high level of achievement in swimming. She is such a humble and modest student. Evie not only broke a long standing record at our swimming carnival this year - she has also been competing at the National Age Championships, which is the highest level of competition for junior swimmers. Evie has qualified for 2 events, along with only 2 other swimmers in the mountains. Her training schedule is intense, seeing her train 6-7 times per week and swimming up to 25km each week. What impressive commitment, Evie. Congratulations.

