



Term 1 Week 1 Newsletter

Karuah Public School Newsletter



Monday 2 February

- All students commence school for Term 1 (Kindergarten to Yr 6)
- Stewart House Commences

Tuesday 3 February

- Stewart House

Wednesday 4 February

- Kinder first day photos

- World Read Aloud Day
- Stewart House

Thursday 5 February

- Stewart House

Friday 6 February

- Stewart House
- Sports Captain voting



Monday 9 February

- Stewart House

Tuesday 10 February

- Safer Internet Day
- Stewart House

Wednesday 11 February

- Meet the Teacher night 5pm
- International Day of Women and Girls in Science
- Stewart House

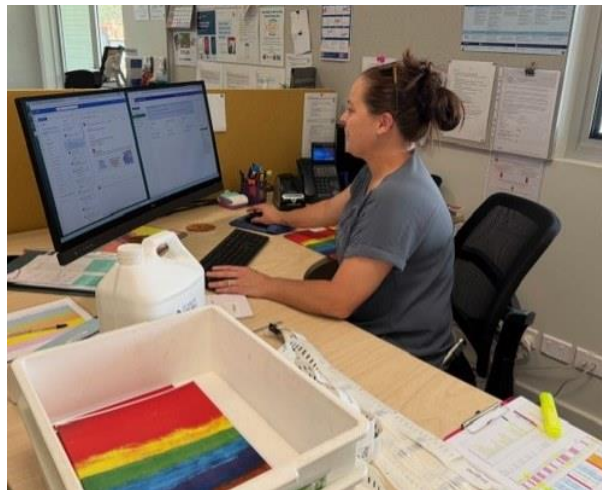
Thursday 12 February

- Stewart House

Friday 13 February

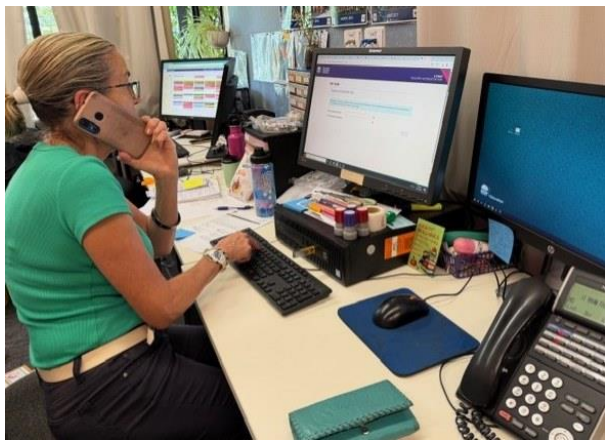
- School Swimming Carnival - Tea Gardens Pool
- Stewart House

Principal's Report











Welcome back!



Welcome back to Term 1 for 2026!

I hope you all enjoyed a restful and wonderful break and had the chance to spend time with family and friends. It is fantastic to be returning to Karuah Public School after some time working across the Lake Macquarie network as Relieving Director of Educational Leadership. Our little school is such a special place to work, learn and play, and it is always a privilege to call Karuah Public School home.

This week has seen all staff return to school to engage in Staff Development Days and professional learning. Teachers have also been working closely with student learning data, reviewing individual learning needs, and ensuring thorough handover of information to our new and excited teachers. Classrooms and learning programs have been busily prepared and are ready to welcome our K–6 students on Monday.

First Day Back – Monday February 2 ALL STUDENTS!

*All students commence on **Monday**, which is also **Kindergarten’s first day of school**. We will gather for our usual morning assembly. Students are welcome to place their bags on their **2025 classroom hooks**. Kindergarten students will be directed to their bag area upon arrival which will be on the concrete verandan outside the hall.*

After assembly, students will be escorted to their new classrooms and teachers for 2026.



The poster features a green background with a school crest on the left containing the motto 'Look, Listen and Learn' and a large letter 'K'. Below the crest is a circular photo of two young children in school uniforms. To the right, the text reads: 'Back to School' with three yellow triangles, 'IMPORTANT DATES' in large green letters, a bulleted list of dates and times, and 'All students - Kindergarten to Year 6 return: MONDAY FEBRUARY 2ND' in white and yellow text.

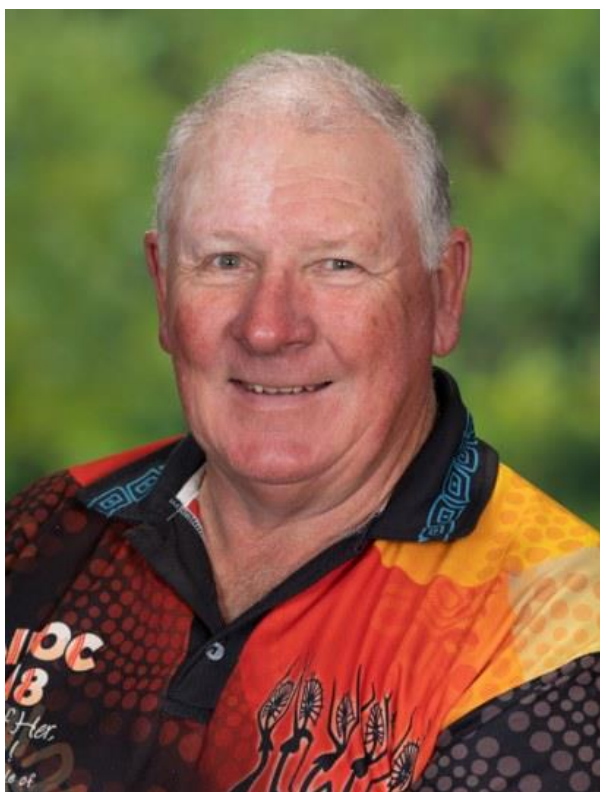
Back to School

IMPORTANT DATES

- Staff return Tuesday
January 27th
- Office open 27th to 30th
January - 8.30am to 3.00pm

All students -
Kindergarten to Year 6
return:
MONDAY FEBRUARY 2ND

Staffing Update – 2026



*It is with great sadness, but also with immense gratitude and happiness for him, that we share the retirement of our long-standing and much-loved General Assistant, **Mr Barry "Baz" Shearman**. Baz has been an absolute cornerstone of Karuah Public School for many years. His skill, craftsmanship and attention to detail are second to none, but even more than that, Baz's quiet care, generosity and pride in our school have left a lasting mark on our grounds, our buildings and our community.*

Baz knows every corner of our school, every squeaky hinge and every muddy patch — and he has always gone above and beyond to make Karuah Public School a safe and beautiful place for our students and staff. While he is easing into semi-retirement, we know he will never be far away and look forward to seeing him pop in from time to time. Baz will be truly missed, and we thank him sincerely for everything he has given to our school.

We warmly welcome **Mr Lukas Woolley** as our new General Assistant. A well-known local community member, we are not quite sure who is more excited — Mr Woolley or the students! We are thrilled to have Lukas joining the Karuah team.

Also easing into retirement is our wonderful **Mrs Shearman**, who is currently on leave and will be returning on Tuesday's, Wednesday's and Thursday's each week. We warmly welcome **Mrs Amy Van Heers** from Bellbird Public School, who will be joining us on

Monday's and Friday's as our relieving School Administration Manager for Mrs Shearman on those days. Mrs Van Heers brings wonderful experience and warmth and is already proving to be a great asset to our school.

In further news, **Mr Hayes** will be with us for the first week with students; however, he will then head off for the remainder of the term on paternity leave as he prepares to welcome his **second child** — such exciting news for him and his family! Mr Hayes will return in Term 2, and families can be assured that his class will be in very capable and caring hands during his absence.

To ensure continuity for students, we warmly welcome **Mr Michael Gilshanen** to the Karuah Public School team. Michael will be **relieving Mr Hayes during his period of paternity leave**, and we are thrilled to have him joining our school community. We know he will quickly become a valued and familiar face for students and families.

We also have some more wonderful and breaking news to share — **Ms Druce** is expecting her **first baby** later in the year! We are absolutely delighted for her. Ms Druce will commence her leave later in the year, and her class will be expertly supported by her trusted and outstanding co-teacher, **Mrs Chelsea Robards**, who will take over the class during her leave. Such an exciting time all round!

A Growing School – A Proactive Approach

*As many of you know, Karuah Public School continues to grow rapidly in student numbers. While our enrolments increase, our classroom spaces and staffing allocations remain the same. To preserve our high-quality learning environment, maintain smaller and more individualised class sizes, and continue the strong results our students achieve, we are introducing a new class structure that **aligns closely with NSW syllabus and curriculum expectations through stage-based groupings.***

- **Early Stage 1 (Kindergarten)**
 - **Stage 1 (Year 1 and Year 2)**
 - **Stage 2 (Year 3 and Year 4)**
 - **Stage 3 (Year 5 and Year 6)**
-

Something New in 2026 – Our Early Stage 1 and Stage 1 Learning Zone

With very large numbers in both Kindergarten and Year 1 this year, maintaining separate or 'straight' Kindergarten, Year 1 and Year 2 classes while keeping infant classes small and manageable is no longer logistically possible.

To best support our youngest learners, **all Kindergarten to Year 2 classes will be located in the F Block buildings along Tarean Road in 2026**, creating a dedicated **Early Stage 1 and Stage 1 learning zone**. This area will be supported by strong staffing levels and interactive learning environments.

This arrangement will:

- Provide a more settled and supported start for Kindergarten students, learning alongside experienced and independent peers
- Avoid having one very large Kindergarten class in the current Kindergarten block
- Prevent small groups of students being separated from peers and placed in distant learning spaces
- Allow flexibility as new enrolments occur throughout the year

We are very excited about this transition. As a school that prides itself on **individualised learning**, guided by the literacy and numeracy progressions, this change will **not negatively impact your child's education**. In fact, it strengthens our capacity to deliver targeted, high-quality learning for every student. All student learning data is tracked and monitored regularly — often daily — to ensure growth and success.

Similarly Stage-Based Classes in Years 3–6

To ensure consistency across the school, students in Years 3–6 will also be now known as **stage-based classes**, with classes being referred to as **Stage 2**, and **Stage 3** classrooms.

This approach aligns with NSW syllabus and curriculum requirements and supports greater flexibility as enrolments change across the year. Stage-based groupings allow us to balance classes more effectively, respond to individual learning needs, and reduce pressure on any single year group that may experience consistent new enrolments.

As always, teaching and learning will remain **highly individualised**, with student progress closely monitored through the literacy and numeracy progressions. Our high expectations for student wellbeing and academic growth remain unchanged. Please note: For this year only, our Stage 2 and Stage 3 class cohorts will look similar to last year student groupings, it will just be the class year group name that will change to stage names.

Karuah Public School Class Structure 2026

Early Stage 1 / Stage 1

- **Guula (Koalas)** – Early Stage 1/Stage 1 (K/1)
- **Guparr (Dolphins)** – Early Stage 1/Stage 1 (K/1)
- **Mikiri (Echidnas)** – S1 (1/2)

Stage 2

- **Gaaku (Kookaburras)** – Stage 2 (Y3)
- **Wambuyn (Kangaroos)** – Stage 2 (Y4)

Stage 3

- **Girriwa (Goannas)** – Stage 3 (Y5)
- **Waakan (Crows)** – Stage 3 (Y6)



1 - ES1/S1

*Early Stage 1/Stage 1 (ES1/S1): **Guula (Koalas)***

Teacher

-
- *Mrs Chrissy Dibley*

Student Learning Support Officers

-
- *Mrs Sharon Long*
 - *Mr Dan Evans*
-



*Early Stage 1/Stage 1 (ES1/S1): **Guparr (Dolphins)***

Teachers

- *Ms Zita Druce (Mon-Thurs)*
 - *Mrs Chelsea Robards (Thurs/Fri)*
-

Student Learning Support Officers

- *Mrs Julie Young (Mon-Wed)*
 - *Mrs Jess Neilson (Tues-Fri)*
 - *Miss Joanne Rose (Mon and Fri)*
-



2 - S1

Stage 1 (S1): Mikiri (Echidnas)

Teacher

-
-
- *Miss Sarah Foister*
-

Student Learning Support Officers

-
- *Mrs Jan Campbell (Mon-Frid)*
 - *Miss Joanne Rose (Tues/Wed)*
-



3 - S2

Stage 2 (S2): Gaaku (Kookaburras)

Teacher

-
- *Miss Eleanor Collins*
-

Student Learning Support Officers

-
- *Mrs Sally Walker (Mon-Fri)*
 - *Mrs Tara Mellor (Mon/Tues)*
 - *Mrs Kourtney Deacon (Wed)*
-



4 - S2

Stage 2 (S2): Wambuyn (Kangaroos)

Teacher

-
- *Mr Cohen Hayes (Terms 2, 3, 4)*
 - *Mr Michael Gilshenan (Term 1)*
-



5 - S3

Stage 3 (S3): Girriwa (Goannas)

Teacher

-
- *Mr Charles Fielder*
-



Stage 3 (S3): **Waakan (Crows)**

- *Miss Jessie Hicks*
-

Scripture, Ethics and Non-Scripture Classes - PLEASE READ AND CONSIDER

*Currently, a large number of students are opted out of **both** SRE and SEE, meaning a large group of students are not engaged in meaningful learning during this time and need to be supervised by teaching staff.*

Karuah Public School offers:

- ***Special Religious Education (SRE)** delivered by wonderful local providers*
 - ***Special Education in Ethics (SEE)** — a **non-religious** program focused on moral and ethical learning (see more below)*
-

*It is important to clarify that opting out of both does **not** result in extra learning time or free time.*

Department policy states that students who opt out of both programs:

- Cannot participate in curriculum lessons or extracurricular activities
 - Must be supervised in a separate space
 - Are expected to sit quietly and read
-

I would like to reiterate that there is no play or alternative program permitted during this time.

Both SRE and SEE offer valuable lessons that promote strong morals, values and respectful discussion - something we can all do with learning about and revisiting. I strongly encourage families to reconsider opting out of both options and use this time constructively for more valuable opportunities for self-betterment.

Programs are available on request.

Finally, Important Dates – Coming Up

Don't forget these important days coming up in Week 2 and 3. Always check out our school website and newsletter calendars regularly to keep up to date. Keep in mind:

- **Wednesday Week 2:** Kindergarten first photo
- **Friday Week 2:** Whole-school voting for Sports Captains
- **Wednesday Week 3:** Meet the Teacher evening
- **Friday Week 3:** School Swimming Carnival (Tea Gardens Pool – students aged 8 years and over)

Please note: **All detailed communication and notes will now be shared via the Sentral Parent Portal**, rather than through the newsletter. Please ensure you are checking Sentral regularly.

Warm regards

Ms Toni Lyle

Principal

Meet the TEAM!

Teaching Team



A grid of eight circular portraits of teachers, arranged in two rows of four. Each portrait is set against a green background with a white border. The names and roles of the teachers are listed below each portrait.

Chrissy Dibley Teacher ES/S1 (Guula)	Zita Druce Teacher ES/S1 (Cuparr)	Chelsea Robards Teacher ES/S1 (Cuparr)	Sarah Foister Teacher S1 (Mikin)
Eleanor Collins Teacher S2 (Gaaku)	Cohen Hayes Teacher S2 (Wambuyn)	Michael Gilshenan Teacher S2 (Wambuyn)	Charles Fielder Teacher S3 (Girriwa)

Teaching Team



A grid of two circular portraits of teachers, arranged in a single row of two. Each portrait is set against a green background with a white border. The names and roles of the teachers are listed below each portrait.

Jessie Hicks Teacher S3 (Wakaan)	Kath Henry Teacher RFF S1-S3
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School Administrative and Support Staff



A grid of four circular portraits of school administrative and support staff, arranged in a single row of four. Each portrait is set against a green background with a white border. The names and roles of the staff members are listed below each portrait.

Ruth Shearman School Administration Manager	Amy Van Heers School Administration Manager (Relieving)	Aunty Kellie Bills School Administrative Officer Aboriginal Education Officer	Angela Blyton School Administrative Officer
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School Administrative and Support Staff



A grid of eight circular portraits of school administrative and support staff, arranged in two rows of four. Each portrait is set against a green background with a white border. The names and roles of the staff members are listed below each portrait.

Kourtney Deacon School Administrative Officer/SLSO	Sharon Long Student Learning Support Officer	Dan Evans Student Learning Support Officer	Julie Young Student Learning Support Officer
Jan Campbell Student Learning Support Officer	Jess Neilson Student Learning Support Officer	Sally Walker Student Learning Support Officer	Aunty Nikki Ridgeway School Administrative Officer Aboriginal Education Officer



Ethics, scripture and non-scripture 2026

Ethics lessons are delivered by trained and impartial volunteers who follow scripts reviewed and approved by the Department of Education. The class forms a community of inquiry with the teacher seated within the circle of students. The lessons are a chance for students to engage in meaningful discussions of age-appropriate real-life ethical issues, such as fairness, friendship, honesty and the ethical treatment of animals. Ethics teachers present stories and questions that encourage students to critically explore ethical dilemmas through discussion with their peers.

Ethic lessons are open to students from Years 3 to 6 and are an alternative option to scripture and non-scripture. Allocated time is on a Friday 9.15 am until 9.45 am. Ethics, scripture and non-scripture will commence Term 1 Week 4 (20-02-26).

Kind regards,

Mrs Henry (co-ordinator)



Ethics education for children...
...Skills for life
Primary
ETHICS
THINK • REASON • DISCUSS
primaryethics.com.au

COMMUNITY NEWS

Karuah OSHC - 0476 454 037



Karuah OSHC
BEFORE AND AFTER SCHOOL CARE
AND VACATION CARE

Where?
Karuah Public School
18 Bundabah Street, Karuah

Before School	6:30am to 8:30am
After School	3:00pm to 6:00pm
Vacation Care	6:30am to 6:00pm

Each session can be booked separately

Operated by:
Karuah
Preschool

Contact us for more information

karuahpreschool@gmail.com
Phone: 02 4997 5670

Karuah Pearls Netball Club



KPNBC

Seniors
\$210

Intermediate
\$185

NetSetGo 5-10
\$175

WE PLAY AND TRAIN IN RAYMOND TERRACE
PLAYING SEASON - 2ND MAY - 19TH SEPTEMBER
✦ NSW ACTIVE KIDS VOUCHERS ACCEPTED - APPLY BEFORE REGISTERING!
FOR MORE INFORMATION EMAIL:
karuahpearlsnetballclub@gmail.com

Term Calendar 2026



DATES ARE SUBJECT TO CHANGE & WILL BE ADVERTISED IN THE NEWSLETTER AND SENTRAL PARENT PORTAL APP

Term 1



Monday 16 February

Tuesday 17 February

Wednesday 18 February

Thursday 19 February

- Kate Washington 2026 Leaders Morning Tea - Hunter River High School

Friday 20 February

- Scripture commences
- Assembly



Monday 23 February

- Zone Swimming Carnival - Raymond Terrace

Tuesday 24 February

- Football Gala Day - NNSW Football (Soccer)

Wednesday 25 February

Thursday 26 February

Friday 27 February

- Clean Up Australia Day
- Attendance Reward Day
- Assembly



Monday 2 March

Tuesday 3 March

Wednesday 4 March

Thursday 5 March

Friday 6 March

- School Cross Country
- Assembly



Monday 9 March

Tuesday 10 March

- School Photos

Wednesday 11 March

- NAPLAN

Thursday 12 March

- NAPLAN

Friday 13 March

- NAPLAN
- Zone Rugby League trials - Raymond Terrace
- Assembly



Monday 16 March

- Harmony Week
- NAPLAN

Tuesday 17 March

- Harmony Day - wear orange or cultural clothing/outfit
- NAPLAN

Wednesday 18 March

- Harmony Week
- NAPLAN

Thursday 19 March

- National Close the Gap Day
- Harmony Week
- NAPLAN

Friday 20 March

- Harmony Week

- NAPLAN
- Assembly



Monday 23 March

- NAPLAN

Tuesday 24 March

Wednesday 25 March

- Stage 2 excursion - Blackbutt Reserve
- Stage 3 excursion - Hunter Wetlands

Thursday 26 March

- Early Stage 1/Stage 1 excursion - Hunter Valley Wildlife Park

Friday 27 March

- Zone Cross Country - Lakeside
- Assembly



Monday 30 march

Tuesday 31 March

- Hunter NRL Trials - boys

- Morpeth Newcastle Knights League Stars Challenge - u/10's
- PBL Citizenship Awards - Council Chambers 3:30pm

Wednesday 1 April

Thursday 2 April

- Easter Hat Parade - 2pm
- Last day of term

Friday 3 April

- Good Friday

Contact Us

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