

Helena River Waldorf School Mandoon Bilya Gathering, 2027

Through walking, listening, experiencing, and creating on-Country alongside Traditional Owners, we can actively absorb the living wisdom of the land to regenerate learning and healing forces. By stepping out of the classroom and on to Country, we can quiet our thinking and listen to the wisdom of Indigenous knowings with absolute presence, gaining a firsthand, spiritual insight into First Nations connection to place and allowing us to deepen our understandings and collectively walk the path towards reconciliation.

Teachers will leave this three-day intensive with a revitalised connection to Indigenous Knowledges and a grounded, place-based pedagogy that brings authentic warmth and vitality into our practice.



In consultation with local Indigenous Elders and Community members, Helena River Waldorf School in Boorloo (Perth, WA), is excited to offer a unique, three-day, on-Country professional development conference.

This offering will allow opportunities for participants to engage with place-based learning, cultural understanding and practises that support authentic connection to Country (Indigenous ways of knowing).

Attendees will enjoy three days of thought provoking, meaningful and purposeful workshops guided and led by Indigenous Elders and Community members, as well as opportunities to embed cultural Knowledges into Waldorf curriculum, which will include timetabled year-level sessions, opportunities to share resources and time to connect.

We invite you to join us on-Country at Helena River Waldorf School.

- 20 - 22 January 2027
- Accommodation options include on-Country camping on the school grounds, or a variety of accommodation options available nearby.
- All meals included.
- Cost: \$450 per person
- Bookings [HERE](#)



HELENA RIVER
WALDORF SCHOOL

Keynote Speakers and Activities



Dr Noel Nannup

Aboriginal Astronomy Guided Experience

Dr Noel Nannup is a respected Aboriginal Elder, storyteller and cultural guide. He is a heritage consultant, has been named NAIDOC Male Elder of the Year, and is Edith Cowan University's Elder in Residence. Noel has been an author, cultural guide, Elder in Residence and leader of many reconciliation projects.

Dr Nannup will be leading participants on an Indigenous Star Gazing and Cultural astronomy awareness evening.

Arron Yarran Warrajirri-Yarra

Artistic Workshop

Arron Yarran, known as Warrajirri-Yarra, is a respected Nyiyaparli-Nyoongar woman from Ethel Creek and Roy Hill in the Pilbara, Western Australia. Arron grew up in Geraldton and the Southern Wheatbelt Regions of Western Australia and is a renowned artist, and the founder of MaOchre Gallery in Midland, Western Australia.

Arron's work weaves together the stories of her people and her own journey, exploring themes of culture, identity, and healing. Alongside her acclaimed artwork, she is deeply involved in community programs supporting Aboriginal youth and artists and is a proud mother of one daughter, two grandsons, one grand-daughter and one great-grandson!

Arron will be guiding participants through an artistic experience using painting and bush flowers as well as an incredible journey into Indigenous Basket Weaving.



Lucy Arnall (Aunty Lulu)

Lucy Arnall (Auntie Lulu!) from Bibbul Ngarma Aboriginal Association (BNAA).

Lucy is a multifaceted First Nations artist, proud descendant of the Kungarakan (NT) and Bibbulmun Nyoongar (WA) people and a collaborative creative whose skills and passions live within the performing arts, healing and youth mentoring space.

An award-winning WAAPA graduate, singer/songwriter, actress, co-founder of a Traditional Women's dance troupe 'Djoogan Keeninyirra', and creator of the traditional medicine workspace 'Djitjirtj', Lucy is also a passionate youth worker and has enjoyed roles at 12 Buckets and Go Cultural, where she worked to preserve her communities' culture, songs and stories as a First Nations guide and workshop facilitator.

Lucy has been working deeply with staff, parents and students at Helena River Waldorf school through a unique program where she leads us through on-Country learning whilst deepening connection and understanding.

Lucy will be guiding participants through an extended Welcome to Country, Bilya (River) Walks, Yarning Circles and exploring what connection to Country means and will deliver an incredible guided presentation on decolonising educational spaces and healing Country.





Dr Simon Cherriman

Connection to Local Place & Flora/Fauna

Simon Cherriman is an award-winning environmental scientist, educator and wildlife filmmaker and an enthusiastic advocate for the unique Australian bush and its creatures. Simon grew up in the Perth Hills and spent his childhood climbing trees, observing birds and learning firsthand about the local environment.

It was at 15 that he found a giant Wedge-tailed Eagle nest and this captivated and inspired him to spend more than half his life studying, photographing and filming these magnificent birds, incorporating eagles into much of his tertiary education. Currently Simon continues to spread his passion for the environment through his small business, iNSiGHT Ornithology, which specialises in bird-related research and environmental education, and he is currently undertaking PhD research on Wedge-tailed Eagle population dynamics and movement ecology at Murdoch University.

Dr Cherriman will take participants on a journey through nature and local place, exploring plants, animals and conservation.



Kylie Oldridge

Indigenous Weaving Workshop

Kylie Oldridge is a contemporary Aboriginal artist and qualified teacher with a background of experience with neurodiverse and trauma informed practices. Kylie lives on Whadjuck Boodjar in Perth, WA and operates her own art business, Quiddity Design. Kylie approaches art intuitively and is driven by the innate therapeutic benefits of art, along with a keen desire to share the magic of art with everyone.

When engaging in weaving and basketry, Kylie invokes a sense of grounding and ancestral connection through her incredible designs and through her inspiration from the natural and spiritual worlds. Kylie will be sharing her passion for weaving and basketry through a wonderful workshop.



Jacinda Blurton

Truth Telling & Generational Trauma

Jacinda Blurton is an incredible young Nyoongar and Martu woman and Director for the Sister Kate's Home Kids Aboriginal Corporation, an organisation set up to support and honour Stolen Generation Survivors.

Jacinda is a Stolen Generations descendant whose work deeply acknowledges the impact of generational trauma on the children and grandchildren of the Stolen Generation. Jacinda has presented at Helena River Waldorf School and supported staff to deepen their understanding and connection to truth telling and Indigenous culture.

Jacinda will guide participants through her experiences, knowledge and supports around truth-telling and youth in schools whilst building understanding of language, Culture and connection.

James Deefholts

Deepening Connection to Country through Place-Based Camps

James is an Education Leader with over 15 years' experience, specialising in Rudolf Steiner Education. He holds a Bachelor of Education and completed his Steiner teacher training at Parsifal College in Sydney in 2002.

James has completed three cycles of class teaching at Chrysalis Steiner School and Cape Byron Rudolf Steiner School. Throughout this time, he has been involved with school management serving as Chair of the College of Teachers and on the Board of Directors. James has been a teacher educator at Sydney Rudolf Steiner College and is currently Co-Head and Primary School Director at Cape Byron Rudolf Steiner School.

James will be sharing his knowledge and inspirations around camps and how educators can deepen their connection to country and place through deepening camp experiences in schools.

