ATHELSTONE

The science of speaking

James Gratton

WHEN Claudia Floreani speaks, she turns heads for all the right reasons.

The Year 11 St Ignatius student won first place in the state finals of last month’s Plain English Speaking Awards.

The awards are a public speaking competition for high school students across the state.

During the preliminary heats, students are given eight minutes to present a speech to a panel of judges on a topic of their choice.

At the finals, students are given a topic chosen by the judges and have four minutes to write their speech.

Claudia says she still gets nervous before going on stage. “Before anyone gets up to speak they get nervous,” Claudia, 17, of Kensington, says.

“But I think getting nervous is a good thing because it is a sign that you care and are enthusiastic about what you are talking about.”

Claudia jumps at the chance to incorporate her love of science in her speeches. “I really enjoy science and so I love including that in my public speaking whenever I can,” she says. “It is something that I’m really passionate and enthusiastic about which I think comes across when I speak.”

She will attend the national finals next week in Sydney. The winner will travel to London to compete at Parliament House.