

**Concord High School**

**Literacy Plan**

2024-2025

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|  | | **Junior (Years 7-9)** | | | | **Senior (Years 10-12)** | | |
| **Responsibility** | **Target** | | **Year 7** | **Year 8** | **Year 9** | **Year 10** | **Year 11** | **Year 12** |
| *Whole School* | **1. Writing basics** | | Whole School focus on recognising the value of bookwork. Y7-10 Bookwork criteria to be implemented across each faculty to include a focus on writing, grammar, spelling and full sentences. This bookwork policy would cater to the specific needs of each faculty.  Whole School focus on grammar and punctuation basics. Y7-10 will revise and improve their ability to use capital letters, sentence structure, punctuation (commas and full stops) and vocabulary in their writing. | | | | | |
| **2. Extended Responses** | | A Whole School approach using ALARM (Mathematics will use the ALERT structure) to commence Term 3, 2024. The whole school approach will provide students with a consistent language and approach to extended response writing. | | | | | |
| **3. Supporting students with Literacy across Stage 4 and Stage 5** | | Targeted support for students through the Small Group Tuition program with James Cheeseman. Students are targeted using NAPLAN data, classroom work samples and assessment data. Students attend lessons once every week for a semester. | | | | | |
| *Literacy Implementation Team* | **4. Junior School** | | An approach to explicitly support writing in Year 8 in preparation for NAPLAN 2025. All KLA’s will develop and teach 1 persuasive task and 1 creative task for Year 8 per term. These tasks can be either formative or summative. This will commence Term 3, 2024. | | |  | | |
| **5. Senior School** | |  | | | A whole school approach to extended response writing using the ALARM structure will create a culture of consistency, explicit teaching and high expectations.  All KLA’s and stages will use the ALARM structure by Term 4, 2024. | | |
| *Faculty* | **6. Explicit Literacy Lessons (integrated into the English timetable)** | | Explicit Literacy lessons that focus on reading comprehension, writing, grammar and punctuation and spelling. All Literacy classes will have a separate Literacy Google Classroom and content will align with the English units of work. | | |  | | |
| **7. Create a reading culture that celebrates and recognises the value of literature** | | Integration of Premier Reading Challenge into lessons.  Strengthen the relationship between the English Faculty and Library through Library Reading Workshops at the beginning of every term. | | | Stage 6 focus on academic articles and readings in Standard, Advanced and Extension English. | | |
| *Staff* | **8.  Professional Learning** | | All CHS staff will undertake professional learning in the ALARM (A Learning and Response Matrix) framework to enhance their implementation expertise.  The Literacy Implementation Team will deliver professional learning workshops focused on grammar, punctuation, and writing pedagogy for Stages 4 and 5. | | | | | |

## **1.** **Writing Basics**

## ***Proposal 1:*** A whole School focus on recognising the value of bookwork. Y7-10 bookwork criteria to be implemented across each faculty to include a focus on writing, grammar, spelling and full sentences. This bookwork policy would cater to the specific needs of each faculty.

## ***Context/Background:***

## Discussions surrounding bookwork marks occurred in response to the Senior Executive raising concerns over the decrease in student ability to use basic writing skills (writing, punctuation, and grammar). Following this, discussions at faculty and Executive level occurred about the introduction of a consistent bookwork system. As of 2024, all faculties have their own bookwork policy. Each of the book work policies are issued to students at the beginning of the year. Currently, there is an individualised approach to monitoring bookwork.

## ***Action/Time required for implementation:***

## At the end of 2024, the Literacy Implementation team will evaluate the success and effectiveness of each faculty's bookwork policy and how it can be improved for 2025.

## ***Evidence of strategy:*** Student workbooks, NAPLAN results

***Proposal 2:*** A Whole School focus on grammar and punctuation basics. All KLA’s will explicitly address the students' use of capital letters, sentence structure, punctuation (commas and full stops) and vocabulary in their writing.

***Context/Background:***

In the past at Concord High School, there has been an effort to teach grammar and punctuation in Literacy lessons and also in English, especially in the lead up to NAPLAN. In recent years, there has been no whole school approach to teaching grammar and punctuation, nor has there been a specific focus on the elements that students would learn and refine.

## ***What the Data/ Research says:***

Using the Year 7 2024 NAPLAN data, 64.3% of students have strong or exceeding proficiency levels in grammar and punctuation. Strong proficiency students **meet** challenging but reasonable expectations at the time of testing. Exceeding proficiency students **exceed** expectations at the time of testing. 35.2% of Year 7 student test results indicated a proficiency level of developing or need for additional support. The percentage of students at the developing proficiency level (working towards expectations at the time of testing) is significantly higher than SSSG and accounts for over one third of the student cohort in Year 7. In Year 9, 61.2% of students have strong or exceeding proficiency levels of grammar and punctuation whilst 38.9% of students have proficiency levels at developing or need additional support. Again, the percentage of developing students is significantly higher than the SSSG data. 2023 NAPLAN data showed 35.4% of students in Year 9 are at a proficiency level below expectations at the time of testing, suggesting a negative trend and growing problem in this literacy domain. Furthermore, when compared to the other literacy domains, grammar and punctuation is significantly weaker by a large margin.

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## ***Action/Time required for implementation:***

* 2024 Term 3 Staff Professional Development on Grammar and Punctuation led by the Literacy Implementation Team. Staff members strengthened their knowledge of grammar and punctuation to teach these concepts more confidently in the classroom.
* Introduction of a consistent grammar and punctuation marking code to be used in all KLA’s.
* 2024 Term 4 focus on sentence structure in persuasive and creative writing (complex sentence structure)
* PL time for staff to mark student work using the grammar and punctuation marking code.

## **2.** **Extended Responses**

## ***Proposal 1:*** A Whole School Approach Using ALARM (Mathematics Will Use the ALERT Structure). The whole school approach will provide students with a consistent language and approach to extended response writing.

## ***Context/Background:***

## The need for a structured approach to extended response writing has become increasingly evident as educators strive to improve student outcomes across all subjects. Many students struggle with articulating their thoughts clearly and coherently in written form, impacting their overall academic performance. Implementing the ALARM framework will standardise the writing process across the school, providing students with the tools they need to effectively communicate their understanding and reasoning.

## ***What the Data/Research Says:***

## Data from educational research indicates that explicit instruction in writing frameworks significantly improves students' performance in extended responses. Studies show that students who engage with structured writing approaches demonstrate greater success in articulating their ideas and reasoning. Additionally, research highlights the importance of consistency in teaching practices, as it allows students to transfer their skills across subjects. Implementing ALARM will support students in developing a cohesive writing style that meets the demands of various academic disciplines.

## ***Action/Time Required for Implementation:***

## The implementation of the ALARM framework began with professional development workshops for teachers in Term 1 and Term 2 of 2024. These sessions focused on familiarising staff with the ALARM methodology and its application in their respective courses. Throughout the 2024 school year, ongoing support was provided through collaborative planning sessions, peer observations, and feedback opportunities. The aim is to ensure that all staff are confident in using ALARM and ALERT by the start of 2025.

## ***Evidence of Strategy:*** Whole school ALARM template, classroom signage and posters, work samples from all KLA’s, formative and summative assessment data, HSC data.

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## **3. Supporting students with Literacy across Stage 4 and Stage 5**

***Proposal:*** Targeted support for students through the Small Group Tuition program with James Cheeseman. Students are targeted using NAPLAN data, classroom work samples and assessment data. Students attend lessons once every week for a semester.

***Context/ Background:***

In 2022, Concord High School utilised government funding to implement a COVID Literacy program in which a range of English teachers worked with small groups of students in Years 7-10 who had been identified as having low level literacy skills. In these lessons, the teachers worked with students on their English course work and completed intensive literacy activities.

***What the Data/ Research says:***

Using the 2024 NAPLAN data, 31.3% of Year 7 students have developing writing skills or need additional support. Similarly, 32.9% of Year 9 students have developing literacy abilities or need additional support. There is a clear correlation between the year groups that would suggest that in Stages 4 and 5, nearly one third of students are not meeting average writing standards.

Furthermore, the Department of Education’s report ‘What Works Best: Practices for Effective Teaching’ states that targeted support that uses explicit instructions and effective feedback in smaller class sizes has a greater impact on student learning. NESA also notes that “small group teaching, delivered by professional educators, is very effective in boosting students’ learning” (NESA, 2021).

Programs like Small Group Tuition provides the benefit of clear instruction together with prompt feedback on a student’s performance. It also provides the model for students to reflect on their learning while also developing strategies to enhance their own self monitoring and learning. Lessons are developed in response to student data. Many lessons incorporate a collaborative discussion style to foster learning while also seeking to develop a positive approach to learning.

***Action/Time required for implementation:***

* The Head Teacher of English and James Cheeseman will identify appropriate students for the program (using formative and summative assessment data, NAPLAN results and other written samples).
* On Fridays, James Cheeseman will have Small Group Tuition lessons with 5 targeted students from Years 7-10.
* James Cheeseman will develop resources and lessons for the students to improve their literacy abilities
* James Cheeseman will collect work samples and data to track student growth and progress.

***Time frame:*** Selected students will be a part of the Small Group Tuition program for onesemester and then the groups will be reviewed.

***Evidence of Strategy:*** Student attendance, exercise book checks, student engagement, pre and post benchmark written responses, formative and summative assessment data and NAPLAN results.

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## **4. Junior School Focus: Narrative and Persuasive writing at Faculty Level**

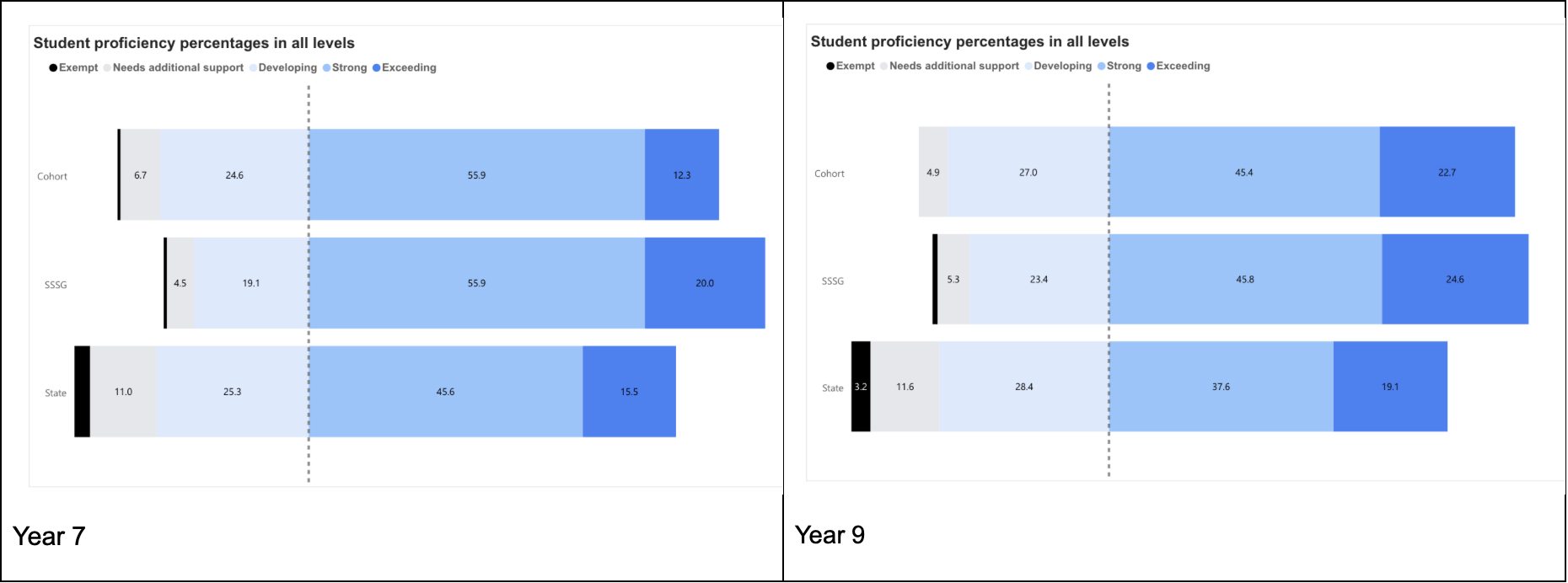
***Proposal:*** Explicit teaching of narrative and persuasive writing within all KLAs for Years 7-9 (Specifically Y8 2024)

***Context/ Background:***

In the past at Concord High School, there has been an effort to explicitly teach narrative and persuasive writing in preparation for NAPLAN, particularly in English. However, there was no whole school approach nor was there a consistent marking criteria used by all KLAs.

***What the Data/ Research says:***

Using the 2024 NAPLAN Data, 68.1% of Year 9 students have strong or exceeding writing abilities, whilst 31.9% of student test results indicated their proficiency level is developing or needs additional support. Similarly, in Year 7, 31.3% of student test results indicated their writing abilities are developing or needs additional support. There is a clear correlation between the year groups that would suggest that in Stages 4 and 5, nearly one third of students are not meeting average writing standards.



***Action/Time required for implementation:***

* English KLA (and Humanities) have a formal assessment task that integrates either creative or persuasive writing focus for Years 7-9.
* A Twilight PL was led by the Literacy Implementation team to revise creative and persuasive form with staff and coordinate a consistent, whole school marking criteria to be used for all summative and formative assessment tasks.
* All KLAs have created a persuasive and narrative writing task for Year 8 in Semester 2. Implementation Team members supported faculties with the development of tasks and creation of resources using the scaffolds and marking criteria outlined by the Head Teacher of English.
* KLAs were allocated time in Term 3, and will be given time in Term 4 Week 2 to create effective resources, integrating narrative and persuasive writing elements
* KLAs will have time in Week 6 to mark student creative or persuasive responses with the support of the Literacy Implementation team.

***Time frame:***  All KLAs to develop a creative and persuasive task for Year 8 in Term 3 and Term 4 2024. All faculties will use the marking criteria from the Term 3 Twilight PL in their tasks.

***Evidence of Strategy:*** Collation of resources including writing tasks and sample marked responses by the Literacy Implementation Team in the CHS Literacy Google Drive, 2025 NAPLAN results

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## **5. Senior School**

***Proposal:*** A Whole School Approach to extended response writing using the ALARM structure to create a culture of consistency, explicit teaching, and high expectations.

***Context:***

The implementation of the ALARM framework across all Key Learning Areas (KLAs) is designed to enhance the quality of extended response writing in our school. Currently, students face challenges in producing coherent and well-structured written responses, which can hinder their academic success. By adopting the ALARM structure, we aim to provide a consistent and clear approach that supports students in articulating their ideas effectively, fostering a shared understanding of expectations across all subjects and stages.

***What the Data/Research Says:***

Studies show that explicit instruction in writing frameworks helps students develop the critical skills necessary for producing high-quality extended responses. Data indicates that when students are taught using consistent strategies, they demonstrate greater confidence and competency in their writing. Moreover, a culture of high expectations is fostered when all educators share a common framework, leading to improved overall student outcomes.

***Action/Time Required for Implementation:***

The rollout of the ALARM framework commenced in Term 1 of 2024, with professional development sessions for all staff to ensure they are equipped to teach the ALARM structure effectively. Throughout the year, staff will engage in collaborative planning and sharing of best practices to reinforce the framework's application in their respective KLAs. By Term 4 of 2024, all KLAs and stages will fully implement the ALARM structure, ensuring a cohesive approach to teaching extended response writing.

***Evidence of Strategy:*** A minimum of one work sample will be required to be uploaded by all teachers for all classes.

## **6. Explicit Literacy Lessons (Integrated into the English timetable)**

***Proposal:*** To continue explicit Literacy lessons in Years 7-10 that focus on reading, comprehension, writing, grammar, punctuation and spelling. All literacy classes will have a separate Literacy Google Classroom and content will align with the English curriculum and units of work. Literacy activities will be developed and informed by NAPLAN data, formative and summative assessment tasks and bookwork activities.

***Context/ Background:***

Previously at Concord High School there were specific Literacy periods (2 periods a cycle) for Stages 4 and 5 that were dedicated to Literacy and Wide Reading. With the implementation of the Wellbeing periods into the timetable (2024), these two periods were decreased to 1, and the English faculty decided to keep the Literacy period in the timetable.

Prior to 2023, Wordflyers was the core component of the Literacy program, however, an evaluation found that the teaching and learning programs were not effectively targeting areas of need; that data was not effectively gathered; that literacy was not explicitly taught effectively or resourced and the Wordflyers program was not effectively developing student skills. The Literacy period was also not clearly identified by staff and rather integrated in English lessons.

From 2023, Wordflyers was no longer used as a Literacy learning platform, and lessons became more teacher centred and consistent across all classes. Activities were linked to the units of work, making the learning more relevant and meaningful to them.

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Description automatically generated***What the Data/ Research says:***

*Above:* Year 8 Check-in data on reading

***Action / Time required for implementation:***

* 2024 English Literacy Lesson Coordinator. This new role will ensure that all English teachers have scheduled their fortnightly Literacy lesson, created and organised their Literacy Google Classroom and planned resources for their lessons. At English faculty meetings, the coordinator will give updates on Literacy programs and activities for greater consistency.
* The Literacy Coordinator will work closely with the other Year group coordinators to improve the programs and units of work so Literacy lessons, activities and strategies are included.
* The Literacy Coordinator will review the organisation and accessibility of Literacy lesson resources in the Google Drive. They will also review the textbooks available and how these could be used for lessons.

***Time frame:*** The English Literacy Lesson Coordinator position will commence at the start of 2025. Stages 4 and 5 programs will be reviewed and improved throughout the year.

***Evidence of Strategy:***Collation of resources and programs by the Literacy Coordinator in 2025; NAPLAN results

## **7. Create a reading culture that celebrates and recognises the value of literature**

***Proposal:*** The Premier's Reading Challenge will be incorporated into the Stages 4 and 5 curriculum. Stage 6 English students will study academic texts and articles aligned with their units to enhance vocabulary and deepen their understanding of literary concepts, authorial intent, and textual analysis.

***Context/ Background:***

Previously at Concord High School there was a timetabled Wide Reading period integrated into the English curriculum. In 2024, Stages 4 and 5 English classes integrated 10 minutes of reading time at the beginning of every lesson for the Premier Reading Challenge. As a part of building a reading culture in the English faculty, all classrooms and the English common had bookshelves installed with a range of literature that is easily accessible to all students. The CHS Librarian, Jason Munday, has also created presentations on the Premier Reading Challenge to raise awareness and grow enthusiasm within the student base. In Stage 6, students have previously been given access to academic literature as a way of developing their understanding of HSC course concepts, however, this was not done consistently across Standard, Advanced and Extension.

***What the Data/ Research says:***

2024 NAPLAN results indicate a consistent decline in reading performance across Stages 4 and 5. While scores remain above state average, they fall significantly below SSSG levels. Over 30% of both Year 7 and Year 9 cohorts demonstrate developing abilities or require additional support.

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*Above:* Concord High School Premier’s Reading Challenge

***Action required for implementation:***

* All Stages 4 and 5 English classes will continue to participate in the Premier Reading Challenge
* All English classes will begin with 10-15 minutes of focused and meaningful reading (‘pick and stick’ approach)
* Facilitate library-based Premier's Reading Challenge workshops focusing on age-appropriate literature selection and reading strategies
* Standardize access to module-specific academic journals across all Stage 6 English courses
* Coordinate Sydney Writers Festival excursions for HPGE students in Stages 4 and 5

***Time frame:***In 2025, the English Faculty will continue the Premier's Reading Challenge in collaboration with the Library. Stage 6 English courses will provide access to module-specific academic journals. In Term 2, Y7-10 HPGE classes will go to the Sydney Writers Festival.

***Evidence of Strategy:*** NAPLAN reading data, Premiers Reading Challenge data, formative and summative assessment data, HSC data analysis.

## **8. Professional Learning**

***Proposal:*** All CHS staff will undertake professional learning in the ALARM (A Learning and Response Matrix) framework to enhance their implementation expertise. Furthermore, staff will engage in professional learning programs focused on grammar, punctuation, and writing pedagogy for Stages 4 and 5.

***Context/ Background:***

Throughout 2023, staff engaged in targeted professional learning to embed NESA verbs within Stage 6 programming. All faculties implemented the Verb of the Fortnight initiative to enhance student response capabilities. The Instructional Leader of Literacy, Jessica Jones, collaborated with faculty heads to develop integrated literacy resources.

Throughout 2023 and 2024, Alice Leung has provided all CHS staff with professional learning on how to use SCOUT, Check-in and NAPLAN data. These workshops have provided staff with the understanding of how to use these platforms and access the data.

In recent years, there have been Professional Learning sessions on elements of Literacy (extended writing structures and data analysis); however, there has been limited big picture Literacy Professional Learning.

***What the Data/ Research says:***

‘A way to improve literacy and numeracy through teacher professional development is to ensure that teachers possess the technical expertise to make the best use of data and the evidence base. Research shows that effective teachers use data and other evidence to constantly assess how well students are progressing in response to their lessons’ (Timperley & Parr 2009).

In ‘How schools can improve literacy and numeracy performance and why it (still) matters’ by CESES it states that ‘Quality professional learning increases teaching quality. Research indicates that professional learning is most effective if it deepens teachers’ content knowledge and knowledge about how students learn that content; is supported by the wider school community and is seen as part of achieving whole school goals; and is linked to clear and relevant goals that are related to student outcomes’ (CESE, 2016).

***Action/ Time required for implementation:***

* 2024 Term 1: ALARM workshops for executive staff presented by Max Woods
* 2024 Semester 1: Fortnightly staff PL focusing on ALARM (facilitated by the Logical Coordinator: Bivona and Sloane and the Connotative Coordinator: Chalmers)
* 2024 Semester 2: Fortnightly staff PL focusing on Stage 4 writing strategies to improve creative and persuasive writing skills.
* Implementation of a consistent marking criteria for persuasive and creative writing.
* 2024 Semester 2: All staff participate in Grammar and Punctuation workshops aimed at improving their understanding and confidence with grammar and punctuation. Furthermore, the implementation of a whole school marking code for G&P.
* Literacy Implementation team members to engage in ETA professional learning programs that focus on grammar and punctuation and writing.

***Time frame:*** The Literacy Implementation Team will facilitate ongoing professional learning in 2025, focusing on writing, grammar, and punctuation for Stages 4 and 5. Staff will continue to develop their ALARM framework expertise through sustained professional development.

***Evidence of Strategy:***Professional learning resources, feedback surveys, ALARM integrated programs and resources, Y8 creative and persuasive tasks.