

2024 saw the first year of implementation of the Tasmanian Government's Community-wide Framework for Lifting Literacy. Lifting Literacy aspires to 100% literacy in Tasmania *"so that all Tasmanians can benefit from the social and economic benefits of literacy"*.

The initiative reaches across the whole lifespan from birth, early childhood and to adulthood, but at the heart of the approach is a Minimum Schooling Guarantee. The guarantee promises that all schools - government and non-government - will implement evidence-based structured literacy practices with multi-tiered systems of support for all learners.

The Premier has appointed an independent skills-based group – the Lifting Literacy Outcomes Monitoring Group (LLOMG) - to provide oversight and monitoring of the Lifting Literacy Implementation Plan 2024-2026. As a key component of structured literacy, the LLOMG welcomes the recent announcement from the Minister for Education, Jo Palmer, that the Year 1 Phonics Check results for 2024 show an increase in the number of students meeting or exceeding expected phonics achievement. This is a heartening improvement in a very short time. It represents a great deal of effort and commitment from many people, particularly those in Tasmania's three schooling sectors and those on the 'front line' – our classroom teachers.

The Year 1 Phonics Check is a key component of the Lifting Literacy Plan - but it is just one part of a major transformation happening in classrooms across the State. The evidence-based approach to teaching our young people to read and write – structured literacy – is new for many classroom teachers and requires them to change their practice. Teachers are responding with enthusiasm.

The LLOMG has received positive feedback from classroom teachers who are learning and applying the new approach. Their responses have described their excitement regarding the outcomes for their students and also the reduction of their own workloads.

For the students:

- We didn't think our kids could do this
- I thought it would take a lot longer to see a difference
- The kids loved it too. Their behaviour has also improved, they are so engaged.
- My students are exceeding my expectations
- All I'm saying is, this is extraordinary.

For teachers:

- I don't have to plan at home anymore
- I'm no longer doing my school planning while I'm eating my dinner
- I always wondered what it would be like to have a job you could actually leave at work – and now I know
- Just do it, do it now!

*Structured Literacy* refers to an approach to teaching reading and writing that draws on the accumulated evidence from high quality research. The hallmarks of Structured Literacy are:

1. It teaches all the components of reading and writing that research has found to be most important
2. It uses the teaching approaches that evidence shows to be most effective.

Structured Literacy from the Preparatory year that is explicit, systematic and cumulative, diagnostic and responsive, ensures all children are able to read, create and engage with rich, grade level and

complex texts when they reach the upper primary years, and are well positioned for successful learning in secondary schooling.

The LLOMG congratulates the Tasmanian schooling sectors and community for embracing this change and wishes all involved a restful and rejuvenating break over the summer, empowered for year two of implementation of the Lifting Literacy Community-wide Framework and our collective aspiration for 100% literacy in Tasmania. Thank you.

See <https://www.tas.gov.au/literacy/outcomes-monitoring-group> for information on the Lifting Literacy Outcomes Monitoring Group.

*Dr Michele Bruniges, Chair, Lifting Literacy Outcomes Monitoring Group*