

# Whole School Language Programs – A Universal Approach



Pamela Thuan – Mahogany Rise Primary School - email: thuan.pamela.j@edumail.vic.gov.au

## Demographics of Mahogany Rise Primary School

Located in a low socio-economic area, many students enter the school with language well below the expected norm. A high number of students are “at risk” due to their environment and/or cognitive ability.

Edward (grade 1): “I like the Language Program because we get to do fun stuff like making stories and doing puzzles.”

## Whole school language program model

**Universal servicing – for all students.**  
SLP drives whole school language program:

- develop/run class language sessions
- provide professional development to staff
- participate in literacy planning
- develop whole school language data
- work in with the curriculum

Lilah (prep): “The Language Program is important because we learn new things like helping friends is nice and we write words that rhyme on the white-board.”

## The Whole School Language Program at Mahogany Rise

**Small group servicing – for students with severe language, social, articulation and/or literacy difficulties**

- All students are tested yearly using standardized test to track language progress

- All teachers are provided regular training by SLP

**Individual servicing for complex students**

- Resources are provided through a website - [www.languageintheclass.com](http://www.languageintheclass.com)

- Literacy and language plans are developed collaboratively in line with the curriculum between teachers and SLPs

- All classes run weekly sessions dedicated to oral language with the SLP

## How our school works

We aim to empower students through giving them support, resilience, a voice and the best possible educational outcomes. To do this we:

- Have a team of teachers, SLPs, psychologists, pediatrician, occupational therapist, chaplain, welfare workers, parent liaison officer and others that work collaboratively in the school
- Have whole school programs for language, literacy, behaviour and numeracy that ensure continuity, high standards and evidence based practice
- Have clear avenues of communication between all stake holders

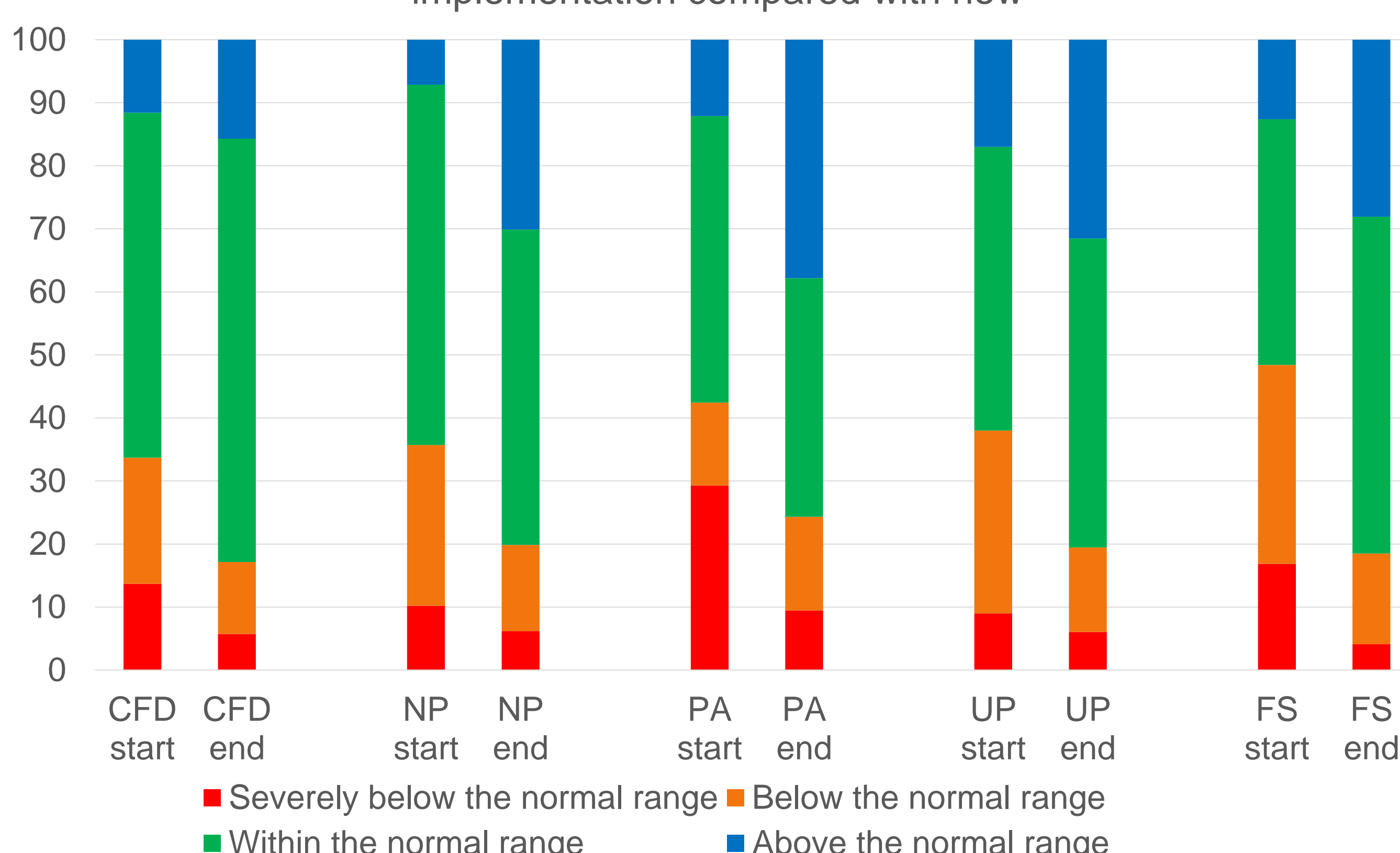
## Why a Whole School Language Program?

- Improves student learning outcomes.
- Provides teachers with skills, knowledge and resources to provide comprehensive language programs.
- Provides normed data to track language development and evaluate services.
- Increases understanding of individual learning styles.
- Improves ability to appropriately differentiate in the classroom so students are working at their individual level with appropriate goals.

## Results of whole school implementation of language program at Mahogany Rise Primary School

CFD – concepts and following directions  
NP – narrative production  
PA – phonemic awareness  
UP – understanding spoken paragraphs  
FS – formulating grammatically correct sentences

Percentage of students at each level - start of whole school implementation compared with now



## Tools for starting a Whole School Language Program

- Ensure administration understands and supports the program
- Work collaboratively
- Consider the schools strategic plan and curriculum
- Join the Whole Class Language interest group (email Pamela)
- Collect resources appropriate for class use
- Use free resources available at [www.languageintheclass.com](http://www.languageintheclass.com)
- Use free language songs from youtube – learning4life songs

Howard (grade 4): “It is good because when I came I wasn’t very good at saying words and now I speak better than before. People that come to Australia can get taught to talk properly with the Oral Language Program.”