

## Kau Yan School (Kindergarten)

School Year 2016-2017

Principal's Message (1)

24 Jan 2017

Time flies! 1<sup>st</sup> semester is almost finished. From the smiling faces, the energy that was brought to school and the curiosity during different exploring activities, we can see that children have built up the knowledge about learning, the school environment and people through the "School and me" project. Therefore, develops a sense of belonging and confidence in learning. In the project "Resources of the Earth", through observing the surrounding of natural environment and exploring with different senses, it builds up children's distinguishing, sorting, hypothesis, reasoning and verifying skills. The above observation was confirmed by parents during group sharing time of K1, K2 school visits in November last year and January this year. This encourages our team a lot.

Recently I have read an article about education titled "你的生活方式藏著你受過的教育"<sup>1</sup>, the author mentioned his interpretation of education and what education is concisely and clearly, the content is very similar to our belief. Let me share some of it in this message.

### The Key of Education




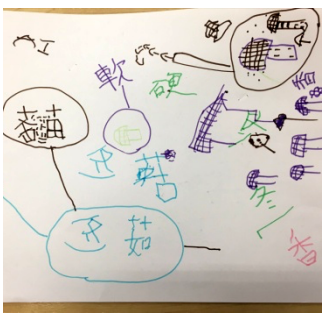
"Education background and knowledge from school is temporary, however ability to self-educate is a life-long asset." Just like the author's view on education listed above, the target of our curriculum is to develop children's self-learning ability. Teachers make use of every project to let children experience the process from discovering an interest points to the search of answers. In order to find a solution, children will need to link up their past experience, make hypothesis for things that they don't understand and take actions to verify the hypothesis. Take the project "Resources of the Earth" as an example, children observed the surrounding carefully when visiting the Hong Kong Zoological and Botanical Park. In the process, they are interested in the phenomenon of different sounds created by still and moving water. They hypothesized the difference was caused by "moving" and "not moving" of water, then carried out tests to verify the hypothesis. Later, they also applied the knowledge to make toys with sound, solved how to make objects produce sound and discovered the sound produced is related to the stuff stored in the object. Through different projects one after another, children can develop the knowledge of "how to learn" and reach the target of self-learning.



## Education That Gives Children Happiness

In the article, the thing that makes “true educators” applaud the most must be the idea of “no stage is merely the preparation of the next stage”. For us, the goal of working in education industry is to train talents to adapt the development of future. However, under the premise of “preparing for the future”, we still need to provide appropriate education based on children’s development. Under the education system and social environment nowadays, many parents are forced to see their kids *as a future existence*. For example, a child is still at his/ her literacy emergent stage but parents have to urge their child to recite literal symbols, write words that they do not understand because of primary school admission. This strangled children’s interests in expressing themselves with words and replaced the process of understanding literal symbols through all-rounded and multi-perspective activities, exploring symbolic meaning of language through reading written text, transition from learning language through actual facts to written non-interactive form, and improving/ reading ability and language level.

The thankful thing is, most of our parents understand that childhood is an important part of life development, helping children’s whole person development and building their learning ability and interests at this stage is the main objective of receiving early childhood education. Although facing the torrent of education system, parents still work with our teachers. Through different projects, parent-child reading, story creation, life sharing, etc., children can build text concept from meaningful scenes. Recently, many parents shared with me that their children have develop a reading habit because of different reading experiences. They are amazed that their children even bring along their books when going out. At school, we can see the literacy emergent stage in all year classes, for example:

			
<p>Expressing their ideas with drawings or asking others to help them write down what they want to say.</p> <p>Children expressing “Do not waste water when washing hands”</p>	<p>Using text to express their ideas            ( Left ) Children expressing “Happy new year”            ( Right ) Children expressing “grass” and “tree”</p>	<p>Using lines and symbol to represent text and express their ideas.</p> <p>Children expressing “wind”, “rain” and “Typhoon 8”</p>	<p>Try to express their ideas by writing Chinese characters independently (including the errors) or imitating the sample text with similar font.</p> <p>Children expressing “mushrooms were hard, but become soft after cooking. They smell good.”</p>



Imitate Chinese character with correct font to express their ideas

Writing some Chinese phrases to express their ideas independently

Writing some Chinese sentences to express their ideas independently, there is modification in sentence pattern, font is prettier.

Speaking of literacy emergent, we need to understand that read and write is not merely a cognitive skill, it is also a complicated psychosocial language activity. That includes language and literal function and application; internalization of language rules; distinguishing between drawing and writing; reading characters appear in daily life; linking books and reading together; looking forward to reading and writing, consider these as meaningful activities; and start to test and scribble words. For the seven stages above, we need to give children time and space for development, provide a lot spontaneous language activities and language context for children to develop gradually. This is also what our teaching team has been working on every day, helping to children to grow according to their own pace.

#### Attitude of life - education

Other than developing the ability of self-learning and literacy emergent, some parents happily shared that their children told them about the experience they have earned during class exploration. One of the parents told us that he had never tasted papaya before, his child introduced it to him after exploration at school, this became he first time in life. At the same time, some parents also said that their children would not share about the content of class activities with them. It is not difficult to understand why when we apply our own experience to the children's world. When we go home after a day of work and being asked about the details of today's work and things encountered, we will need some time to answer. It is because our family was not at the workplace, it is not easy to explain to them. Also, some children have a stable learning schedule, other than special situations, they might only share when they encounter things that are similar to their learning experience. However, no matter if your child loves to share or not, we can see that they all share the love of asking questions, observation and exploration. This is exactly what was mentioned in the article: From children's attitude of life, knowing children have acquired learning method, habit and the love of learning.



Chinese New Year is almost here! During this holiday, I will go to Swiss for an exchange program with Head Teachers Ms Wong and Ms Kwong. Hopefully through the exchange program, we can

broaden our knowledge on education and bring the best education to our children.

On behalf of Kindergarten Section, I wish you good health and Lord's overflow blessings upon you!



KWAN Shan, Principal

<sup>1</sup>周國平（2016），你的生活方式藏著你受過的教育，24 Oct 2016, from <https://www.master-insight.com/你的生活方式藏著你受過的教育/>

Encourage parents to read the original article, please refer to the link below:

