

Cover: Craft "A Thank-You Tree Celebrating New Beginnings"

Smiling faces of children wearing tassel caps spread across a big tree.

This scene, illustrated alongside the words "Thank you," beautifully conveys a sense of gratitude for the days spent at Kinder Kids and the warmth of the time shared and cherished with friends.

With countless memories held close, they step forward into the futures—

a warm and touching scene that beautifully celebrates the joy and emotions of the graduation season.

Expanding future possibilities

Hirakû

44

**We look forward to
your ideas!**

"Hiraku" provides useful information
and the latest news related to
English and childhood education.

- Your recent interests
- Topics you want us to cover
- New content etc etc...

If you have ideas to contribute,
please share these with us!

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Hirakû

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- ★ Tomigaoka School Alumni Visit Their Alma Mater: A Synergy Education Experience
- ★ Infinity: "Creating Our Own Field Trip" / Internal Recommendation Applications Now Open
- ★ Kinder Kids Art Contest 2025: Winners Announced
- ★ Fukuoka School 10th Anniversary Commemorative Event Announcement



日本の心と、英語の力。Kinder Kids Inc.



The Expanding Reach of Learning Through Synergy Education

— Alumni Take a Fresh Look at the Childcare Setting —

A heartwarming reunion took place at Nara Tomigaoka School. Two junior high school students, who graduated from the Tomigaoka School and now attend Ikuei Nishi Junior High School in Nara City, recently visited the school. As part of an inquiry-based learning project at their junior high school, they were given the opportunity to explore the world of early childhood education. Returning to their former school brought back many memories as they reconnected with their teachers and spent time with the children once again. Once students at the school themselves, the two now looked at the work of early childhood education from a new perspective.

This Visit Began with Inquiry-Based Learning

The visit began as part of an inquiry-based learning project at the junior high school the two students now attend. The students, who graduated from Nara Tomigaoka School and now attend Ikueinishi Junior High School in Nara City, have been researching social issues. Through their investigations, they focused on the issue of the shortage of childcare workers. As they continued their research, they became eager to see what the childcare field is actually like in practice—leading to this visit to Tomigaoka School, where they once attended. On



the day of the visit, they observed childcare in several different classes. In the K3 class, the children were engaged in Theme Writing and Coding activities, and the visitors showed strong interest in seeing them learn while using tablets. In particular, Coding was a new activity that did not exist when they were students at the school. Watching children naturally use digital tools as part of their learning, the two students seemed to sense both the changing times and the expanding educational environment. During the Theme Writing activity, they joined the children in thinking about words together and actively took part in the learning by communicating in English. Beyond the classroom, they also took part in a variety of activities during their visit, including dodgeball, spending time in the playground, and interacting with children in the nursery class. Additionally the two students spoke with Ms. Kanako Taniguchi, the CDM (Childcare Development Manager), asking questions about the work of childcare professionals and Kinder Kids' approach. Their attentive, serious listening left a strong impression, as they learned about aspects of the job that are not visible from simply watching interactions with children—such as the perspectives, roles, and responsibilities required in the childcare field.

[What Is Synergy Education?]

"Synergy" refers to the idea that when different perspectives or elements come together, they create greater value and deeper learning. Rather than simply acquiring knowledge, synergy education encourages learners to connect what they learn to society and the real world—formulating their own questions, thinking critically, and turning those ideas into action. At Ikuei Nishi Junior High School in Nara City, which the visiting graduates attend, an inquiry-based program called "Synergy Time" is practiced based on this concept.



It's a tough job, but I learned it's a job that can make people smile.

Ikuei Nishi Junior High School .
Grade 8 (2nd year), W.A.

Through our inquiry-based learning at junior high school, we think about social issues. Through this project, I became interested in the issue of the shortage of childcare professionals. Before the visit, I had two impressions: that working with children looks fun and full of smiles, but also that the workload seems heavy and demanding. What I felt when we actually visited the school was that both the teachers and the children were smiling all the time. I also realized that the teachers share responsibilities as a team, which helps reduce the burden on each individual. One moment that stayed with me was when a child asked me how to write a word, and after I answered, they said, "Thank you." Through this experience, I truly felt that childcare professionals carry a major responsibility, while also doing work that can make people smile. I learned that in any job, having a thoughtful and caring attitude towards others is truly essential.



Visiting with a different perspective helped me rediscover the appeal of childcare.

Ikuei Nishi Junior High School,
Grade 8 (2nd year), R.T.

During "Synergy Time" at the junior high school, we engage in learning where we develop our own questions and think and act independently to explore them. Through this program, I became interested in the social issue of the shortage of childcare workers. I had long been interested in working at Kinder Kids, which made me want to see the actual childcare environment firsthand. What stood out to me most during the visit was the new activities using tablets. I was surprised by initiatives that didn't exist when we were students, and I strongly felt both the changing times and how the learning environment has expanded. I also noticed the teachers' thoughtful, attentive care—things I hadn't recognized when I was a child—which helped me realize again how deep and complex childcare work truly is. Above all, the visit deepened my gratitude for the time I spent at Kinder Kids.



Reunited after a long time with their former teachers—Ms. Naoko (their K2 homeroom teacher) and Jon (their K3 homeroom teacher).



Fascinated by the Coding lesson—an activity that didn't exist when they were students.



During their interview with Ms. Kanako, they listened attentively as she spoke about the childcare setting and Kinder Kids' initiatives.



Connecting our daily childcare to the future—so Kinder Kids remains a place they can always come back to.

Naoko Akamatsu
Homeroom Teacher in their K2 year

The moment I saw them again after so long, I couldn't help exclaiming, "Wait—you're already junior high school students?!" I was amazed at how much taller they've grown and how calm and mature they seemed. And yet, when they smiled, I could still see the expressions they had back then, and a wave of nostalgia came over me. Even from their K2 days, they were proactive children who expressed everything with full energy—both the happy moments and the frustrating ones. I still vividly remember one of them playing Tinker Bell in the Christmas concert, as if it were just yesterday. To have them return and visit the school like this, grown so much, is one of the greatest joys I can feel as a childcare professional. I hope Kinder Kids will always remain a place they can "come home" to. With that in mind, I want to continue cherishing each and every connection we share with our children.



The Value of Learning Through Questions and Real-World Experience

Childcare Development Manager
Kanako Taniguchi

What impressed me most about this visit was seeing junior high school students raise a question about the social issue of the childcare worker shortage. The two students came with a clear theme and specific questions in advance. Rather than treating this as a simple job-shadowing experience, they were trying to look at the childcare setting as a social issue. Entering the field with their own questions transformed the entire experience into active, meaningful learning. Seeing them listen carefully to the childcare professionals and genuinely try to understand their work was a powerful reminder of how much they have grown. At the same time, seeing them run around innocently in the schoolyard brought back memories of who they were as children, and it was a heartwarming moment for us as well. This initiative gave us an opportunity to reflect once again on the value of our work. It also left us with a sense of hope—seeing the younger generation take interest in childcare and think about it as a social challenge.

A Field Trip Created by the Students

IPC Unit “Chocolate”

— Visit to Meiji Naruhodo Factory Osaka —



This field trip began with the children’s own ideas.

Connecting it to their learning in the IPC unit “Chocolate,”

they developed it through planning, preparation, and hands-on experience.

From choosing the destination, to pre-learning and then post-learning, this single field trip became an opportunity for deeper inquiry and exploration.



【What Is an “IPC Unit”?】

An IPC unit is a unit of study that connects multiple subjects around one central theme. For example, in the “Chocolate” unit, children use the theme of chocolate—something they love—to deepen their learning across a range of subjects.

A New Challenge Sparked by One Question

In the second term, the students went on a field trip to Koreatown—an invaluable opportunity to experience Korean culture and traditions. At one point during the day, a small observation sparked a new question.

Some of the children mentioned that the lunch provided “wasn't quite enough” .

From that simple comment came a bigger question:

“Are the lunch and even the destination all decided by the teachers?”

Then a fourth-grade student, Y., made a suggestion:

“Then next time, I want us to plan the field trip ourselves.”

That idea became the starting point for a new challenge, led by Y. Little by little, the children’s interest expanded into a bigger perspective: where they should go in order to learn.

Inquiry Learning Connected to the IPC Unit “Chocolate”

This field trip was planned with the aim of connecting the children’s learning in the IPC unit “Chocolate” to real-life experience. When considering where to go, the children proposed several possible destinations. With the guiding question—“Which place connects most closely to our learning?”—they compared and discussed each option.



Y., who first proposed the idea and served as the project leader

Initially, transportation limitations required the group to reconsider their destination options several times. However, through repeated discussions that considered both practical conditions and the educational value, the destination gradually narrowed down, changing course several times along the way.

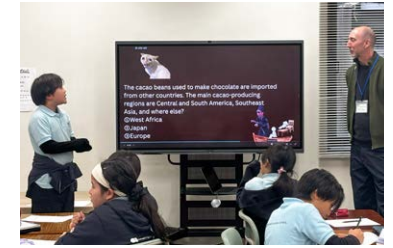
In the end, they chose Meiji Naruhodo Factory Osaka—a place where classroom inquiry could connect directly with learning in the real world. In class, the children had been exploring where cacao is grown, how chocolate spread around the world, and how it has been connected to people’s lives and cultures. Their learning looked at chocolate not simply as a food, but as something deeply tied to history, society, industry, and the environment.

At the chocolate factory, they could observe firsthand the process through which cacao beans are transformed into products. Seeing raw ingredients processed, shaped, and completed as finished goods is, in itself, a lesson in science, technology, and the ingenuity of manufacturing. It became a valuable opportunity for the knowledge gained in the classroom to connect with the real world.

Their learning also expanded beyond the manufacturing process to include broader perspectives—such as sourcing of ingredients, the background of production, and distribution systems. The role of cacao farmers, environmental impact, and international trade all came into view. They also realized that behind something as familiar as chocolate, there are many global issues. Learning about fair trade and sustainable production became an especially important part of their inquiry.

“A single product we choose can be connected to someone’s life somewhere in the world.”

This perspective led to deeper understanding. Through this field trip, the children had an opportunity to redefine chocolate—from “something we eat” to “something that connects people, places, history, and society.”



Prior to the factory visit, the students deepened their understanding of chocolate through preparatory learning



【Meiji Naruhodo Factory Osaka (Takatsuki City)】

A facility where visitors can enjoy learning about the chocolate-making process through factory tours, as well as introductions to chocolate’s nutrients and health benefits. It also offers an engaging look at Meiji’s commitment to safe, reliable manufacturing and its focus on “food and health.”

A Day of Discovery That Deepened Their Inquiry

During the factory visit, the children saw how the knowledge they had developed in the classroom connects to the real world. During the visit, they observed up close how popular products such as Takenoko no Sato and Kinoko no Yama are made. They followed the process as chocolate gradually changes from raw ingredients into a finished product.

One especially memorable moment came from what they noticed on the production line: precise work performed by robots, alongside checks and fine adjustments made by people. Seeing each play a different role while supporting one another gave the children a real sense of how technology and human expertise work together in modern



“It’s not just chocolate!” Discovering the wide range of Meiji products sparked even greater curiosity among the children

manufacturing.

The Q&A session brought even more surprises. For example, they learned that the colors of Marble Chocolate are derived from vegetables, and that squid ink is used in some of the ink for package printing. Encountering the ingenuity and technology behind something so familiar shifted their mindset from “I think I know” to “I want to know more.” This visit was not simply a chance to confirm knowledge—it became a continuous series of discoveries that deepened their inquiry even further.

Inquiry Doesn’ t End in a Single Day — Deepening Learning Through Pre- and Post-Activities —

In the post-learning session, the children engaged in activities designed to deepen what they experienced during the visit. This reflection lesson was planned and led by Y., the student who had been at the center of the project.

The activity theme was “Designing a Chocolate Package.” The chocolate flavor and target age group were decided through a roulette-style selection, and each group then designed a product to match the given conditions. The children expanded their thinking beyond design to include perspectives such as pricing, where it would be sold, color choices, and catchphrases. They asked themselves: “What would make someone want to pick it up?” and “Who is this product for?”

As the knowledge gained from the factory visit connected with their own ideas, their learning moved into a creative domain. After the presentations, they voted to choose the product that seemed most likely to sell. By recognizing and valuing each other’s ideas, their inquiry deepened even further.



In the post-learning session, each group designed a package based on the assigned “flavor” and “target age,” and presented their ideas to everyone



G4+ Tutor
Mina Noguchi

Genuine Learning Fostered by Initiative

Through this project, we witnessed significant growth in the children. What stood out most was the transformation of the student who first proposed the idea. What began as a single step—“I want to try this myself”—grew into an experience that carried through planning, communication, preparation, and presentation. Completing each stage turned this into learning that went far beyond a typical field trip.

Another important area of growth was realizing how challenging it is to communicate effectively. Through their presentations, the students became more aware of their audience and worked to

express their ideas clearly. This kind of learning—grounded in real experience—is difficult to achieve within the classroom alone.

We also observed internal changes: a deeper understanding of teachers’ work, a shift toward seeing learning from the perspective of those who create it, and a stronger sense of collaboration with peers. This project became a highly meaningful opportunity to cultivate initiative, planning skills, and communication abilities. I believe this experience will continue to serve as a solid foundation for their future learning and school life.



A Summer Free from
Entrance Exam Pressure.

Infinity Global Elementary School

2027 Academic Year **Internal Recommendation Applications Now Open**

For children who are enjoying their daily learning at Kinder Kids—through English study, school routines, and activities—we believe that special entrance exam preparation is unnecessary. To ensure that children are not subjected to excessive exam preparation and can instead cherish their final summer before elementary school with their families, we have introduced an internal recommendation system.

2027 Academic Year Infinity Global Elementary School Internal Recommendation Entrance (Single-Choice Application)

Entrance Examination
: None

Event Fees Until Enrollment
: Waived

Learning Class Enrollment Fee
: Waived

※Students admitted through internal recommendation are encouraged to attend Learning Classes prior to enrollment. The enrollment fee will be offset against the March tuition.

- Application Period** March 23 (Mon) – May 20 (Wed), 5:00 PM
- Eligibility** Children born between April 2, 2020 and April 1, 2021, and currently enrolled at Kinder Kids
- Application Requirements** Recommendation from the child’s current K3 school as of May
※Eligible applicants are admitted based solely on the school’s recommendation; no separate entrance examination is required.
- Application Method** Online application only
※Please download and complete the application form via Kinder+.
- Parent Interview** Conducted on a rolling basis until mid-June
- Provisional Acceptance Announcement** June 24 (Wed), 12:00 PM

[Inquiries]

Please contact us via the inquiry form accessible through the QR code, or by email:admission@infinity-gakuin.jp
※When contacting us by email, please be sure to include your child’s name and current school/grade.





KINDER KIDS Writing & Picture Diary Contest 2025



We received approximately 190 entries for this year's contest. We sincerely thank all participants for their wonderful submissions. Each artwork had its own unique character, beautifully expressing the children's everyday experiences and thoughts. Starting this year, we introduced a participation prize. All participants received a Kinder Kids original multi-purpose case featuring our Phonics Island characters.



Writing Category

R.F.

(Nara Tomigaoka School, K1)



Try-A-Job Experience

During summer vacation, I went to KidZania in Fukuoka with my mom, grandpa, grandma and aunt.

First, I became a model. I was nervous walking by myself.

Next, I was a dancer and performed a Peter Pan dance. It was hard to learn so fast.

Then I became a chef and made Vietnamese pho, it was delicious.

Last, I was a TV newscaster. It was difficult to remember everything in such a short time.

I want to go again with everyone.

Next time, I want to try being a flight attendant and a firefighter.

I went ice fishing.
There was a hole in the ice, and even when I jumped on the ice, it didn't break.
I fished through the hole, it felt like using an elevator.
The fish weren't frozen, and one of them jumped at me.
I thought it was a mysterious hole.



Picture Diary Category

S.K.
Shinagawa School, K2

My Summer Vacation Memories

During summer vacation, I went to Tomamu in Hokkaido with my family. The weather was nice. We rode a gondola to see the sea of clouds and fed sheep. It was so much fun.

The most surprising moment was seeing fifteen deer when we went to the outdoor hot spring. There were baby deer too, and they were very cute.

My mom said, "What perfect timing," and I felt happy.

It was my first time seeing deer up close. Their eyes were big and round, and they looked gentle. The deer kept looking at us.

I want to see them again.



Writing Category

R.M.
Shinagawa School, K3

Swimming Practice

During summer vacation, I went to Odawara with my family. It was cooler than Yokohama, and there were many bamboo trees in the mountains. The air felt very fresh and refreshing. We went to the pool and practiced swimming.

At first, I held onto my mom and dad and swam carefully. But as I kept practicing, I was able to swim by myself using a float. I was very happy.

At first, I was scared of the water, but little by little, I wasn't scared anymore. Swimming by myself felt really good.

I want to swim at the pool in Odawara with my family again.



Writing Category

M.M.
Yokohama School, K3

My First Piano Competition

During summer vacation, I entered a piano competition for the first time. I chose Beethoven's "Ode to Joy" and practiced every day.

I didn't just practice playing, I also sang it in German and went to a concert where it was performed.

Little by little, I began to understand how I wanted to play it.

I was very nervous at the competition, but I sang the song in my heart while I played. I didn't win a prize, but my teacher and family praised me, and I was very happy.

I want to enter the piano competition again next year.

Next time, I want to play with even more feeling.



Writing Category

I.S.
Ashiya School, K3

I love insects.

This summer, I went cicada catching with my dad every day.

One night, we went to see cicadas come out. It was my first time, and I was amazed.

Their new wings were green and very beautiful.

I want to go again next year.



Picture Diary Category

K.N.
Myrica, K2

A Sunny Friday

On Fridays, I go to school with my mom. In the morning, if it's sunny, she says,

"Let's walk to school today."

When I hear that, I feel really, really happy. So I get ready faster than usual. Then we hold hands and set off together.

As we walk, we look for flowers. Cherry blossoms, azaleas, hydrangeas, and sunflowers. When the seasons change, the kinds of flowers change too, and it's fun to find them.

I love sunny Fridays.



Writing Category

K.I.
Fukuoka, K2

Small Hands and a Paper Airplane

This morning, my son was folding a paper airplane. Soft light streamed in, and outside the window the wind stirred the leaves. The fold he had tried so many times before turned out beautifully today.

"It's going to fly!"

he said with a smile as he let it go. The plane caught the gentle breeze and flew straight and far. I remembered how last year it wouldn't fly well, and how disappointed he had been. This year, he is full of confidence. The seasons turn, and I have changed too. But the time I spend watching my son grow is always special. His small hands, his small challenges—each one is a treasure that exists only now.



Parent Participation Category

S.U.'s Father
Takatsuki School, K2



Japanese Learning Div.
Michiko Kobayashi

In the Japanese Language Learning Class, we have introduced a variety of new initiatives this academic year.

Through seasonal activities and creative projects, students experience the changing seasons and traditional events, deepening their appreciation of Japanese culture.

We would also like to thank all the families who shared photos and videos of activities such as paper sumo and fukuwarai at home. Your participation has meant a great deal to us.

In addition to these activities, we are preparing to incorporate moral education themes and topics from the English curriculum into the Learning Class. We have also established a new Senryu category, and we warmly encourage families to enjoy wordplay together and submit their entries.

Through learning, we hope to help nurture "the heart of Japan" in our students. We look forward to your participation again next year.

KINDER KIDS Fukuoka School 10th Anniversary

KidZania Fukuoka × KINDER KIDS International School

KidZania Fukuoka
Private Event

2026
July 17
(Fri)

Fukuoka School is proud to celebrate its 10th anniversary. To express our sincere gratitude for your continued support, we will be holding a special 10th Anniversary Event.

This will be a private KidZania Fukuoka event open to current students and their families, as well as alumni.

We look forward to welcoming you and celebrating this special milestone together.

[KINDER KIDS Fukuoka School 10th Anniversary] KidZania Fukuoka Private Event

Date	July 17, 2026 (Friday)	Venue	KidZania Fukuoka Lalaport Fukuoka, 6-23-1 Naka, Hakata-ku, Fukuoka
Event Time	4:30 PM – 7:30 PM	<p>※Please note that the schedule is subject to change.</p> <p>※As this is a 10th Anniversary event, all classes at Fukuoka School will operate on a shortened schedule that day.</p>	
Event Details	<p>KidZania Fukuoka will be reserved exclusively for this commemorative event. Children in K1 and above may participate in the regular KidZania work experience programs. For children below K1, a dedicated play area and separate age-appropriate work experience programs are planned.</p>		
Eligibility	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Current Fukuoka School students • Fukuoka School Grad students • Siblings of current Kinder Kids students <p>※Please note that this event is limited to the Fukuoka School community. ※Families from other areas may not participate.</p>		
Participation Fee	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • K1-Grad : ¥6,600 • Baby-Pre Kinder : ¥3,300 • Adults (16 years and over) : ¥3,300 <p>※The participation fee will be collected together with the monthly tuition. ※The number of activity booths and the final fee may change depending on total attendance. Thank you for your understanding.</p>		

10th Anniversary Commemorative T-Shirt Now Available for Purchase!

• May be worn as part of the school uniform (2026 academic year only)
• Available for family members as well

★ The attendance confirmation and T-shirt order form will be available on Kinder+ / Grad+ in mid-April.