

First Flight

2018 promises to be yet another exciting year for the children of MOE Kindergarten. In this issue of First Flight, read on to find out how we support the holistic development of our children at MOE Kindergarten and how you can work with your child's teachers in your child's learning journey. Have a peek, too, at how some of our MOE Kindergarten children celebrated the completion of their two years at MOE Kindergarten.

Warm wishes,
The MOE Kindergarten Team

LEARNING AT MOE Kindergarten

Weeks of Wonder (WoW) projects encourage children to collaborate and investigate topics of their interest. Through these projects, they develop their process skills as they gather information from different sources and share their findings, which promotes their communication skills. Check out how our children discover the world around them through two interesting English Language WoW projects!

Exploring Leaves MOE Kindergarten @ Blangah Rise

"Why are some leaves green and others brown?"

"What are the different shapes that leaves have?"

"Can we smell or eat leaves?"

These were some of the questions posed by the curious children from MOE Kindergarten @ Blangah Rise after visiting the garden in Blangah Rise Primary School. The children decided to embark on a WoW project to find out answers to some of these questions.

At the start of the project, the children collected many leaves with their parents. With the large variety of collected leaves, the children decided to sort the leaves according to shape, size and texture. During the sorting process, the children got to count and describe the appearance of the leaves.



The children had fun, sorting leaves according to colours and shapes!



The children also had fun exploring the different properties of the leaves. They rubbed the green leaves on paper and discovered that a green pigment was left behind. They learnt that it was chlorophyll that gave the leaves their green hue. They were thrilled by this discovery and experimented further by doing the same for brown leaves. They found that brown leaves broke easily when rubbed on paper and did not leave any residue on the paper.



The children discovered that "chlorophyll" gives leaves their green hue.

During their interaction with one another, the children learned to clarify some of their misconceptions. For example, it was only after reading the book, 'The Vegetables We Eat' that they discovered that humans do eat leaves, albeit in the form of vegetables.

Their teacher also led the children to discover that different leaves have various scents by getting the children to smell a variety of leaves that she brought to class. One of the children's favourite scents came from the leaves of the Pandan plant.

The children marked the end of their WoW project by creating a myriad of beautiful collages, leaf prints and leaf rubbings. Not only did they deepen their knowledge about leaves, they learnt to develop their investigative skills and their communication and social skills while working on the project with their friends.



Children used their sense of smell to discover the scents of various leaves. The scent of the Pandan leaf was a hot favourite!



Children used the leaves they had collected to create beautiful art works!



The Rabbit Project MOE Kindergarten @ Westwood

While brainstorming on a topic of interest that they wished to explore for their WoW project, the children at MOE Kindergarten @ Westwood unanimously decided on the topic of "Rabbits". Besides sharing what they knew about rabbits, the children posed a slew of questions, such as:

"Rabbits like to sleep. How do they sleep?"

"They are soft to touch. Do they have claws?"

"How do rabbits play?"

"Rabbits eat carrots. How do they eat them?"

After coming up with the questions, the children embarked on a journey of discovery on the behavioural traits and habitat of rabbits. With the support of their teacher, the children gathered more information on rabbits through different sources of information, e.g. books, videos and brochures. The children learnt that rabbits sleep mostly during the day and eat a variety of vegetables. They live in burrows to shelter them from danger and protect them from natural elements like rain.

The children then put their learning into action by designing a habitat for rabbits, using recycled materials and modelling clay. It was a challenge putting different ideas together but the children worked closely with one another. They discussed the different food models they could make. They also tapped each other's imagination and transformed recycled materials, such as egg cartons, toilet rolls, and an empty box, into little rabbits, their food and habitat.

Through the project, the children not only discovered more about rabbits but more importantly, they developed perseverance and understood the importance of respect and cooperation while working alongside their friends.



Children brainstormed on the food models to create based on what they learnt about what rabbits eat.

The children found out that rabbits love eating carrots!



Many pairs of hands and one common goal: the children worked together, using recycled materials to create a rabbit burrow and rabbit crafts.

The children proudly presented their craftwork on rabbits and their habitat.

SNAPSHOTS

The *K2 Celebrations* is a special occasion where families join their children to celebrate the completion of their kindergarten years at MOE Kindergarten. The children marked the occasion by working with their teachers and friends to plan and prepare activities for everyone to have a good time. For children and parents at MOE Kindergarten, *K2 Celebrations* is not only a rite of passage, it is an opportunity for families to bond with their children and to create meaningful memories. Here are some snippets of the celebrations at MOE Kindergarten @ Fernvale Link and MOE Kindergarten @ Northoaks!

MOE Kindergarten @ Fernvale Link



Children and parents came together to put up a performance using instruments made from recycled materials.



Children demonstrated the motor skills they have developed as they challenged themselves to walk on stilts made from recycled tins.



Precious memories were captured on this special day!

MOE Kindergarten @ Northoaks



Working together with their parents, the children wrote their dreams and aspirations on paper which they folded into paper cranes to form a beautiful display.



In one of the game stations, families and their children bonded and had a good laugh as they tried various means to fill a boat with as many animals as they could, without tipping the boat over.



The air was filled with excitement as parent-child pairs faced off in a fun-filled hula-hoop challenge.

THE FACES OF MOE KINDERGARTEN

Children are curious, active and competent individuals who are capable of learning. In order to develop the whole child, that is, their head, heart and hands, it is important to recognise and value every aspect of a child's development in order to maximise his/her potential. We spoke to Dr Tan Ching Ting, Lead Specialist, Pre-school Education, who was instrumental in conceptualising and developing the MOE Kindergarten curriculum.



Dr Tan Ching Ting
Lead Specialist
Pre-school Education
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Q1: Could you share what "holistic development" means?

Holistic development takes into consideration the development of the whole child. It does not only focus on the child's cognitive development and academic capacity but also pays attention to other aspects of a child's social, emotional, and physical development. In order to develop the child holistically, it is important to recognise children as individuals who learn differently and at different rates. Opportunities should be given for children to play, explore and discover as they make meaning out of their learning experiences across different contexts.

Q2: Why is it important to develop children holistically?

It is important to develop children holistically as we would like to equip them with the necessary knowledge, skills and dispositions to meet future challenges in learning and life. This extends beyond how they perform academically, e.g. children learn to sharpen their abilities to problem solve in different situations. We want our children to grow up into confident, socially adaptable and responsible individuals who have a positive attitude towards learning.

Q3: How does the MOE Kindergarten support children's holistic development through its curriculum?

The MOE Kindergarten curriculum nurtures children holistically through six learning areas: 1) Aesthetics and Creative Expression; 2) Discovery of the World; 3) Language and Literacy; 4) Motor Skills Development; 5) Numeracy; and 6) Social and Emotional Development. Children learn through an integrated approach in which teachers help them to make connections across these different learning areas to make sense of the world around them. For example, we have an activity that provides opportunities for children to learn about their neighbourhood or a nearby HDB estate. They talk about and classify the different places and services available to serve the needs of the residents. We then get the children to work in groups to create their own housing estate by considering the need for safety, convenience, and comfort. Through this activity, we aim to help children develop their reasoning skills, creative thinking and imagination, as well as their ability to cooperate with one another. The MOE Kindergarten curriculum involves enjoyable and intentionally planned activities with a distinctive Singapore flavour to make learning fun, meaningful and authentic for the children.



SUPPORTING YOUR CHILD

Holistic development looks into every aspect of a child's growth. As parents, you can play an active role in developing your child holistically. Here are some tips on how you may support your child in his/her holistic development:



- **Nurture your child as a whole and focus on both academic and non-academic areas**

It is natural for parents to be concerned about their child's academic development, but do not neglect other aspects of your child's life. It is important that parents do not acknowledge a child's efforts only in academic-related activities. Encourage and teach your child to be socially responsible and learn to contribute to society through ways such as showing respect for others, keeping the environment clean, and valuing things, both their own and others'. Do not forget to lead by example and to show your appreciation of your child's involvement.

- **Build on your child's interests and strengths**

Children are curious about the world around them. Listen to your child talk, and watch him/her play to discover what interests and excites your child. When children become interested in a topic, they start to ask questions. It is important to capitalise on your child's interests by providing answers to the questions he/she poses and/or encouraging him/her to find out some of the answers. Be patient when you see potential strengths in your child. Support your child's interests and strengths, give him/her time to enjoy these and develop these strengths over time.

- **Engage your child in a wide range of activities that utilise all the senses**

Children tend to play or engage in activities that they are good in. Instead of allowing your child to play or do the same things all the time, encourage him/her to try out different activities. Provide lots of appropriate opportunities and resources to engage your child in a variety of sensorial activities and games. These help to sharpen his/her sense of hearing, smell, sight, taste and touch, and ensure a more balanced development. Tap into community resources and the surrounding environment and start to enhance and enrich your child's daily and learning experiences.

- **Bond with your child**

Parents are the first educators of their child. Children learn best through their everyday experiences with the people they love and trust, and when the learning is fun. Building a close parent-child relationship goes a long way in creating positive and long-term effects on a child's overall development. It provides a strong foundation for your child to establish self-awareness, consideration for others, and an eagerness to learn. Prioritise and spend time with your child, show appreciation and encouragement, and be a good role model. Have fun bonding with your child!

Do you have any comments about our newsletter or the MOE Kindergarten? Do you have a story to share or an MOE Kindergarten staff you would like to thank? Tell us at moe_kn@moe.gov.sg!

For more information on MOE Kindergarten, visit:
www.moe.gov.sg/moekindergarten

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