

Kindergarten Curriculum Guidelines

(Heisei 29/2018 revision)

MEXT Curriculum Guidelines which form the basis of the AIS Education Principle and Policy

Chapter 1 GENERAL PROVISIONS

Section 1 Fundamentals of Kindergarten Education

Education during early childhood plays an important role in cultivating the foundations of character, personality, and individuality, which will extend throughout life. Kindergarten education, in order to achieve the objectives established in the School Education Law, is to be based on the particular characteristics of early childhood and in accordance with actual conditions and environments.

For this reason, teachers should build sufficient, trusting relationships with children in their care, be actively involved in the environment, become aware of the way and meaning of the relationships with the environment, and try to incorporate them by trial and error and thinking. Endeavor to continually create a better educational environment together with young children by making the best use of the viewpoints and ways of thinking in early childhood education. Considering these points, teachers should conduct educational activities giving due importance to the following points:

- 1 Encourage children to undertake activities on their own and allow them to lead a life appropriate to early childhood, based on the idea that young children utilize experiences essential to their development through fully demonstrating their abilities in an emotionally stable manner.
- 2 Comprehensively achieving the aims outlined in Chapter 2, through play-centered instruction, and based on the idea that play - a child's voluntary activity - is an important aspect of learning which cultivates a foundation for the balanced development of physical and mental attributes.
- 3 Aim to carry out developmental tasks while responding to the individual characteristics of each child, based on the idea that early childhood development is achieved through diverse processes and interactions between various aspects of physical and mental growth, and that the life experiences of each child are diverse.

In this regard, teachers should create a learning environment with the intention of ensuring that children participate in voluntary activities, based on an understanding and anticipation of the individual actions of each child. Teachers should therefore create a physical and psychological environment that recognizes the importance of the relationship between the child and other people and things. Teachers should be creative with resources, and also play various roles depending on individual children's activities and should strive to make activities more enriching.

Section 2 Qualities and Abilities Expected to be Fostered by the End of Kindergarten Education

- 1 In kindergartens, in order to develop foundation skills, endeavor to cultivate the following qualities and abilities in an integrated manner based on the basics of kindergarten education shown in the first section of this chapter:
 - (1) "Basic knowledge and skills" that children can feel, notice, understand, and be able to do through rich experiences.
 - (2) "Basic thinking, judgment, expressiveness skills" that children can use to think, try, devise, and

express by using what they have noticed and what they can do.

- (3) "Power and humanity to learn, etc." to lead a better life while feelings, motivation, and attitude grow.

2 The qualities and abilities shown in section 1 are nurtured by the aims and contents of the entire activities shown in Chapter 2.

3 The following qualities to foster by the end of early childhood should be given consideration by teachers when planning activities to meet the aims and develop the content as shown in Chapter 2.

(1) Healthy mind and body

In kindergarten life, children should be able to engage their mind and body in their own way with a sense of fulfillment, act with a perspective, and create a healthy and safe life for themselves.

(2) Independence

By being actively involved in various activities in a familiar environment, children can realize what they have to do on their own, and while thinking and devising ways to achieve these tasks, feel a sense of confidence and accomplishment without giving up.

(3) Cooperation

While interacting with friends, share each other's ideas, and think, devise, and cooperate toward the realization of a common purpose, through which children should be able to accomplish tasks with a sense of fulfillment.

(4) Morality and normative consciousness

Through various experiences with friends, find out what is good and bad, look back on one's actions, sympathize with friends' feelings, and act from the standpoint of the other person. In addition, understand the need to follow the rules, adjust feelings, and make and follow rules while making arrangements with friends.

(5) Relationships in social life

While having a desire to take good care of the family and interacting with people close to the community, notice various ways of interacting with people, think about the feelings of the others, feel the joy of being useful, and become familiar with the community. In addition, while being involved in various environments inside and outside the kindergarten, take in information necessary for play and life, make decisions based on the information, communicate information, and utilize the information in order to work effectively while making use of the information. At the same time, children should be aware of their connection with society by making good use of public facilities.

(6) Cognitive skills

While being actively involved in familiar events, enjoy a variety of relationships, such as feeling, noticing, thinking, anticipating, and devising the nature and mechanism of things. Also, while understanding the various thoughts of friends, notice that others have different thoughts, and each person is able to make their own thoughts while enjoying the joy of creating new thoughts, such as making decisions and changing one's mind.

(7) Relationships with nature and respect for living things

Through experience touching and moving with nature, become able to feel the changes in nature and express oneself with curiosity and inquisitiveness, while increasing interest in familiar events and having a love and awe for nature. In addition, while being moved by familiar animals and plants, become aware

of the mystery and preciousness of life, think about how to interact with familiar animals and plants, treat them as living things, and become involved with the feeling of cherishing them.

(8) Interest and awareness of quantities, shapes, signs and letters, etc.

In play and life, experience familiarity with quantities, figures, signs and letters, notice the role of signs and letters, and utilize them based on one's own needs to have interests, interests and feelings.

(9) Verbal communication

While communicating with teachers and friends and becoming familiar with picture books and stories, acquire rich words and expressions to convey one's experiences and thoughts in words, as well as paying attention to the other people's stories. Through which, children will be able to listen and enjoy verbal communication.

(10) Rich sensitivity and expression

While exercising one's sensitivity, such as heart-moving events, notice the characteristics of various materials and how to express them, and enjoy the process of expressing one's feelings and thoughts oneself and to friends. Through which, children enjoy the joy of expression and become motivated.

Section 3 Curriculum Role and Organization

1 Curriculum Role

In each kindergarten, in accordance with the Fundamental Law of Education, the School Education Law and other laws and regulations, and the guidelines for kindergarten education, an appropriate curriculum that responds to the physical and mental development of children of the kindergarten and its community shall be organized.

In addition, each kindergarten, while paying attention to the overall plan shown in (6) below, shall organize a curriculum based on the "Qualities and Abilities Expected to be Fostered by the End of Kindergarten Education" and evaluate the implementation status of the curriculum. Education at each kindergarten should be systematically based on its curriculum, with continual efforts made to improve it and secure the human or physical system necessary for the implementation of the curriculum.

2 Organization of Kindergarten Educational Objectives and Curriculum

In organizing the curriculum, each kindergarten should clarify its educational goals while taking into account the qualities and abilities that are expected to be nurtured during kindergarten education, and strive to share the basic policy regarding the organization of the curriculum with families and communities.

3 General Points for Curriculum Organization

- (1) Organize specific aims and contents in consideration of the educational period related to the curriculum and the life experience and development process of infants so that the aims shown in Chapter 2 are comprehensively achieved throughout the kindergarten life. In this case, in particular, consideration should be given to foster the characteristics of early childhood development in children during which one forms their own identity, builds an awareness of others, and develops self-control to enable a fulfilling, long-term perspective from admission into kindergarten through to completion.
- (2) The number of weeks of education for each grade of kindergarten shall not be less than 39 weeks, unless there are special circumstances.
- (3) The standard educational time for a day's curriculum in a kindergarten is 4 hours. However, appropriate consideration shall be given to the degree of mental and physical development of the children and the season.

4 Points to Consider when Organizing the Curriculum

The following items should be noted when organizing the curriculum:

- (1) Young children become familiar with kindergarten life through each person's play when they first join kindergarten and through contact with the teacher. Once they have become accustomed to their kindergarten life, they will begin to form relationships with other children, as well as fostering their own independent activities, and come to recognize that other children are necessary to each other, eventually understanding the purpose of cooperating with each other and the entire class to develop a fulfilling kindergarten life. Considering that such development will be expanded through various processes during this time, make sure that activities are developed appropriately for each stage.
- (2) At time of admission, especially when entering at 3 years old, work closely with the family and give due consideration to daily rhythm and safety.
- (3) In order to make kindergarten life safe for young children, consider the environment such as gardens and school grounds and devise appropriate guidance under a cooperative system of faculty and staff, while valuing the independent activities of young children.

5 Points to Consider for Transition to Elementary School Education

- (1) In kindergarten, consider that kindergarten education will lead to the development of the foundation of life and learning at elementary school and beyond, and as such, cultivate the foundation of creative thinking and independent living attitude through life suitable for early childhood.
- (2) Based on the qualities and abilities nurtured in kindergarten education, provide opportunities for exchange of opinions and joint research with elementary school teachers so that a transition to elementary school education can be carried out smoothly. Endeavor to establish a smooth transition between kindergarten education and elementary school education by coordinating with each other.

6 Overall Planning

In each kindergarten, an overall plan shall be made to develop educational activities which integrate with its education program, including those after the end of the school day, and health and safety policy, etc. as shown in Chapter 3.

Section 4 Preparation of Instruction Plan and Evaluation Based on Understanding of Young Children

1 Consideration of Instruction Plan

Kindergarten education aims to achieve its goals through concrete activities which allow young children to be motivated to interact in their environment.

Based on this, in kindergartens, create a harmonious, systematic and developmental teaching plan based on the curriculum of each kindergarten so that a life suitable for early childhood will be developed and appropriate guidance will be provided. Flexible guidance must be provided in line with the activities of the child.

2 Basic Points for Creating an Instruction Plan

- (1) The instruction plan shall be specifically prepared so that each child can develop appropriate early years life skills and obtain the necessary experience in line with the development of the child.
- (2) In creating the instruction plan, the specific aims and contents shall be clearly set, and the activities shall be selected and developed by constructing an appropriate environment, etc., as outlined below:
 - a. Specific aims and contents are set according to the interests of each child, the actual situation of development, etc., considering the process of child development in kindergarten life, the

continuity of the children's live, seasonal changes, etc.

- b. The environment should be structured so that it is appropriate to achieve a concrete aim, and each child should be able to get the necessary experience while developing various activities by being involved in the environment by themselves. At that time, value the way each child lives and the way of thinking, and always make sure that the environment is appropriate.
- c. Keep in mind that the specific activities performed by children will change in various ways in the flow of life; therefore, provide necessary assistance so that each child can follow the activities in the desired direction. At that time, the instruction process shall be appropriately evaluated in accordance with the actual conditions of the children and changes in the circumstances surrounding them, and the instruction plan shall be constantly improved.

3 Points to Consider when Organizing the Curriculum

The following items should be noted when organizing the curriculum:

- (1) Create a long-term instruction plan (annual, term, monthly) with long-term development expectations, and a short-term instruction plan (weekly, daily) that is more specific to the child's life and appropriately guided. In particular, for short-term instruction plans such as weeks and days, consideration should be given to the rhythm of the child's life, and activities with continuous consciousness and interests of the child that are interrelated and incorporated into the natural flow of kindergarten life.
- (2) Encourage children to have various experiences and promote harmonious development of mind and body through relationships with various people and things. At that time, in addition to realizing independent, interactive and deep learning in line with the development of the child, considering that the moving experience will produce the next activity, each experience should be mutually connected and enriching of kindergarten life.
- (3) Based on the fact that the development of language abilities and the development of thinking ability are related, prepare a language environment based on the development of young children throughout their kindergarten life and enhance language activities.
- (4) In order for children to have expectations and motivation for subsequent activities, devise ways to look back and see in play and life with the teacher and other children, taking into account the actual situation of the children.
- (5) When leading an event, adapt appropriately to suit the natural flow of kindergarten life so that children can take the initiative and enjoy the activity. The educational value of each event should be carefully considered so that it does not burden the children.
- (6) Given that direct experiences are important in early childhood, when using information devices such as audiovisual materials and computers, consider the relationship with the experiences of young children, such as complementing experiences that are difficult to obtain in kindergarten life.
- (7) Given that it is important for teachers to have diverse relationships in order to encourage the independent activities of young children, teachers should play various roles such as being understanding or a collaborator, which are necessary for the development of young children. Make sure to give appropriate guidance according to the situation of the activity so that they can get a rich experience.
- (8) Based on the fact that the activities performed by children are diverse, such as individuals, groups, and the entire class, each child should be able to fully satisfy their interests and desires while creating a cooperative system by teachers throughout the kindergarten. Make sure to provide appropriate assistance.

4 Implementation of Evaluation Based on Child Understanding

The following items shall be taken into consideration when conducting an evaluation based on an understanding of the development of each child.

- (1) To promote children's understanding while looking back on the process of instruction, grasp the goodness and potential of each child, and utilize it for improvement of instruction. At that time, it should be noted that children should not be compared with others or against a certain standard.
- (2) Ingenuity should be used to enhance the validity and reliability of the evaluation, and systematic efforts should be promoted so that the information can be appropriately handed over to the next school year or to elementary schools.

Section 5 Guidance for Children with Special Needs

1 When instructing young children with disabilities, consider promoting overall development through living in a group, while utilizing advice or assistance from special schools, etc. The content and method of instruction shall be devised systematically according to the condition of the child. In addition, create and utilize individual educational plans in order to provide support to young children from a long-term perspective by coordinating with related organizations that carry out support, such as home, community and medical care, welfare and health services. In addition to making efforts to do so, endeavor to accurately grasp the actual conditions of each child and create and utilize individual instruction plans.

2 Help children returning from overseas and those who have difficulty learning Japanese necessary for daily life feel at ease in the kindergarten environment by adapting the content and method of instruction systematically according to the actual conditions of each child, such as giving them the opportunity to express themselves.

Section 6 Points to Consider for Kindergarten Management

1 In each kindergarten, under the policy of the principal, the faculty and staff shall appropriately divide the roles based on the division of duties and cooperate with each other to improve the curriculum and guidance. In addition, the school evaluation conducted by each kindergarten should be carried out in line with the curriculum management, considering that the organization, implementation and improvement of the curriculum are the core of educational activities and kindergarten management.

2 Keeping in mind that the life of a young child will gradually expand through the local community based on the family, the life in the kindergarten should be developed while maintaining continuity with the family and the local community. At that time, actively utilize the local nature, human resources including the elderly and children of different ages, and local resources such as events and public facilities, and devise ways to give young children a rich life experience. In addition, consideration should be given when collaborating with the family to provide opportunities to exchange information with parents, as well as opportunities for activities between parents and children so that parents can deepen their understanding of early childhood education.

3 Depending on the actual situation of the area and kindergarten, planning should include cooperation and exchanges with other kindergartens, nursery schools, certified early childhood services, elementary schools, junior high schools, high schools and special support schools. In particular, to enable an effective transition from kindergarten to elementary school, opportunities for interaction between kindergarten children and elementary school children shall be actively provided. In addition, provide opportunities for interaction and joint learning with children with disabilities, and strive to foster an attitude of living together while respecting each other.

Section 7 Educational Activities to be Conducted after the end of Educational Hours Related to the Curriculum, etc.

The kindergarten will carry out educational activities after the end of the educational hours related to the curriculum shown in Chapter 3 based on the purpose and goals stipulated in the School Education Law and the basics of kindergarten education shown in the first of this chapter. In addition, in order to contribute to the achievement of the purpose of the kindergarten, endeavor to support early childhood education at home and in the community so that the entire life of the child will be enriched.

Chapter 2 OBJECTIVES AND CONTENT

The aims shown in this chapter are for qualities and abilities expected to be fostered during kindergarten education based on daily lives of the children, and the content outlines give instruction to achieve those aims. Objectives and related content are shown for Health, Human Relations, Environment, Language, and Expression as appropriate for the development of young children. The handling of the content is a matter to be noted when giving guidance based on the development of the children.

It should be noted that the general aim for each area is for children to gradually achieve while accumulating various experiences throughout their daily life in kindergarten, while the contents are comprehensively instructed through the physical activities that the child develops in relation to the environment.

In addition, consideration should be given to utilize activities and instruction which meet the aims and contents of the qualities and abilities expected to be nurtured during kindergarten education.

If it is particularly necessary, it is permissible to devise appropriate and specific content based on the purpose of each area and add it, but in that case, reference to Chapter 1 should be made. Care must be taken not to deviate from the basics of kindergarten education.

Health

“Cultivating a healthy mind and body will bring the ability to lead a safe and healthy life by yourself.”

1 Objectives

- (1) To act lively and freely and to experience a sense of fulfillment.
- (2) To fully move the body and to exercise willingly.
- (3) To acquire the habits and attitudes necessary for a healthy and safe life, and be able to think ahead in one's actions.

2 Content

- (1) Interact with teachers and friends, and act with a sense of stability.
- (2) Move one's body fully through various kinds of play.
- (3) Play outdoors willingly.
- (4) Become familiar with various activities and engage with joy.
- (5) Enjoy eating with teachers and friends, and show an interest in food.
- (6) Acquire a healthy daily routine.
- (7) Maintain cleanliness and becoming self-sufficient in essential activities, such as changing clothes, eating, and using the bathroom.
- (8) Understand the way of life in kindergarten, and understand the consequences of their actions, while organizing the kindergarten living space without adult assistance.
- (9) Acquire a sense of curiosity about one's health and willingly carry out activities necessary to prevent illness.
- (10) Understand where danger lies, what dangerous play is, and how to act in case of disaster, and take action with regard to safety.

3 Utilization of Content

It is necessary to note the following points with regard to dealing with content related to health.

- (1) Given that there is a close mutual relationship between mental and physical health, teachers should promote flexible development of children's physical and mental to allow the children to enjoy a sense of their own existence and fulfillment acquired through warm relationships with teachers and other children. In particular, teachers should stimulate in children the desire to move their bodies voluntarily by allowing them to experience the pleasant feeling of moving their whole bodies
- (2) Teachers should encourage children to move their whole bodies in order to develop a sense of joy in this activity, and a desire to maintain their health, through various kinds of play in accordance with children's interests, curiosity and abilities. At that time, try to adjust the movement of the body while experiencing various movements.
- (3) Children should be encouraged to expand their interest in and curiosity about the outdoors, given the fact that free physical activity and play in a natural environment stimulates the development of bodily functions. In doing so, teachers should creatively design playgrounds and the placement of playground equipment taking into consideration children's patterns of movement.
- (4) Given the importance of acquiring desirable eating habits for the development of healthy physical and mental wellbeing, teachers should stimulate in children the desire to eat willingly by allowing them to experience the pleasure and joy of eating with teachers and other children in a friendly atmosphere and developing an interest in various kinds of foods, whilst also taking into consideration children's individual dietary lifestyles.
- (5) In terms of the development of essential basic habits, teachers should guide children to acquire the habits necessary for life by fostering self-reliance and developing voluntary activities while at the same time maintaining the importance of relationships with other children, while taking their life experience into consideration.
- (6) When giving guidance on safety, try to provide instruction in a manner which keeps children calm, acquire a stance on safety through play, and help children understand dangerous places and things, and their understanding of safety. In addition, acquire traffic safety habits and take appropriate actions in an emergency such as a disaster through evacuation drills.

Human Relations

"Cultivate your self-reliance and ability to relate with people, so that you can live life enjoying being close with people and supporting one another."

1 Objectives

- (1) To enjoy kindergarten life and to experience a sense of fulfillment in acting by oneself.
- (2) Enjoy working together, deepen relationships, and cooperating with people close to you, and having a sense of affection and trust.
- (3) To acquire socially desirable habits and attitudes.

2 Content

- (1) Experience the enjoyment of spending time with teachers and friends.
- (2) Think and act independently.
- (3) Do things for oneself as far as possible.
- (4) Have the willingness to accomplish things by enjoying various play activities.
- (5) Share enjoyment and sadness through active involvement in relationships with friends.
- (6) Share thoughts with friends and understanding what friends are thinking.
- (7) Understand friends' strengths and experiencing the enjoyment of doing things together.
- (8) Identify common purposes, coming up with creative approaches, and cooperating while engaging in enjoyable activities with friends.
- (9) Understand the difference between good and bad, and applying this to actions.
- (10) Deepen relationships with and being compassionate toward friends.

- (11) Understand the importance of rules and observing them to lead an enjoyable life with friends.
- (12) Take care of common play equipment and apparatus, and sharing them with everyone.
- (13) Become familiar with various people who are deeply involved in their lives, such as the elderly and others in the community.

3 Utilization of Content

It is necessary to note the following points with regard to dealing with content related to health.

- (1) Considering the fact that an individual life built on relationships of trust with teachers serves as a foundation for interpersonal relationships, appropriate support should be provided to children by watching over their actions and encouraging them to experience a wide range of emotions by interacting with their environment in their own way and to get a sense of fulfillment and accomplishment from doing things themselves with a positive attitude through trial and error without giving up.
- (2) Work to develop the ability to interact with people while forming a group that makes the best use of each person. At that time, in the group setting, enable children to express themselves, be recognized by teachers and other children, be aware of their good qualities and characteristics, and be able to act with confidence.
- (3) For children to deepen their relationships with one another and to play in a cooperative manner, teachers should foster in children the ability to act for themselves and encourage them to experience the joy of carrying out activities with friends by trial and error and accomplishing a common goal.
- (4) In order to encourage children to cultivate a growing sense of morality, they should be encouraged to form basic habits, to be aware of the existence of others in their relationships with other children and to respect their friends. Also, teachers should encourage children to develop rich emotions through close contact with surrounding nature, animals, and plant life, and special considerations should be given to the fact that children gradually develop trust and compassion toward others by experiencing, and then learning how to overcome, altercations and setbacks.
- (5) Taking into consideration the fact that children will deepen relationships with others and that the growth of normal consciousness will be cultivated in a group, teachers should nurture in children the ability to control their feelings by encouraging them to express their thoughts, accept one another, and realize the necessity of rules, while allowing them to demonstrate their abilities with the support of relationships of trust with teachers.
- (6) Teachers should encourage children to develop closeness with a diverse range of people in their lives, such as the elderly and others in the community, and to experience the enjoyment of relating to people and the pleasure of being of use to others by allowing them to associate and empathize with these people and to enjoy expressing their feelings and wishes. Teachers should also nurture in children, through daily experiences, an acknowledgement of the love of parents, grandparents and other family members as well as the desire to appreciate and respect them.

Environment

“Fostering children's abilities to relate to the environment with curiosity and inquisition, and to incorporate this into their daily life.”

1 Objectives

- (1) To develop interest in and curiosity about various kinds of things and experiences around them through a sense of familiarity with their surrounding environment and contact with nature.
- (2) To initiate interaction with their surrounding environment, and to enjoy making and discovering new things and incorporating them into their lives.
- (3) To enrich children's understanding of the nature of things, the concepts of quantities, written words, etc. through observing, thinking about and dealing with surrounding things and experiences.

2 Content

- (1) Lead a life close to nature, being aware of its grandeur, beauty and wonder.
- (2) Be in contact with various things in their lives and developing an interest in and curiosity about their nature and organization.
- (3) Be aware of changes in nature and in people's lives in accordance with the seasons.
- (4) Develop and incorporate an interest in things surrounding them, such as nature.
- (5) Acknowledge the importance of life, and appreciating and respecting it by becoming familiar with animals and plants living in the surrounding area.
- (6) Familiarize oneself with various cultures and traditions in our country and local communities in our daily lives.
- (7) Treat one's belongings with care.
- (8) Show interest in familiar objects and play equipment, think how to use them testing one's ability, and play with ingenuity.
- (9) Develop curiosity about the concepts of quantities and diagrams in everyday life.
- (10) Develop curiosity about simple signs and written words in everyday life.
- (11) Develop curiosity about the information and facilities that play an important role in their lives.
- (12) Be familiar with the national flag and all its functions inside and outside the kindergarten.

3 Utilization of Content

It is necessary to note the following points with regard to dealing with content related to health.

- (1) Teachers should place importance on processes enabling children to learn to think for themselves, by maintaining a relationship with their surrounding environment during play, and then developing curiosity about their surroundings. This will facilitate an interest in the significance and workings of their surroundings and enable them to recognize rules and codes. Moreover, teachers should nurture in children the desire to think for themselves, by encouraging them to listen to other children's ideas and to enjoy generating new ideas.
- (2) Teachers should devise processes whereby children can deepen their relationship with nature, given that the foundation for rich emotions, curiosity, the ability to think and expressiveness is cultivated through direct contact with the grandeur, beauty and wonder of nature, something which is very important to experience during early childhood.
- (3) Children should be encouraged to develop a willingness to voluntarily interact with nature through sharing their feelings about things and experiences, and animals and plants living in the surrounding area. This should be done in such a way that these various relationships enable children to foster a sense of attachment and awe toward these things, as well as a respect for life, a spirit of social responsibility, and an inquisitive mind.
- (4) When familiarizing yourself with culture and traditions, you can interact with society through traditional events in Japan such as New Year's and festivals, national anthems, singing songs, nursery rhymes and traditional Japanese play, and activities that come into contact with different cultures to cultivate a sense of connection and a sense of international understanding.
- (5) Children should be encouraged to place importance on their experiences based on the necessities of their own lives, so that interest, curiosity and an understanding of the concepts of quantities and the written word can be fostered.

Language

"Developing the will and attitude to verbally express experiences and thoughts in one's own words, as well as to listen to others' spoken words, and fostering an understanding of language and skills of expression."

1 Objectives

- (1) To experience the enjoyment of expressing personal feelings in their own words.
- (2) To listen closely to other people, to verbalize experiences and thoughts, and to enjoy communicating.
- (3) To have a grasp of the language necessary for everyday life, to be familiar with picture books and stories, enrich one's sense of language, and to communicate feelings with teachers and friends.

2 Content

- (1) Develop an interest in and curiosity about what teachers and friends have to say, and listening and speaking in a friendly manner themselves.
- (2) Express in one's own words what they are doing, seeing, hearing, feeling, thinking, etc.
- (3) Express verbally what one wants or wants someone to do, and ask for clarification when they do not understand.
- (4) Pay attention to what people are saying, making oneself understood to their conversation partner.
- (5) Understand and use words essential to everyday life.
- (6) Greet people in a friendly manner.
- (7) Recognize the enjoyment and beauty of language in daily life.
- (8) Enrich images and language through various experiences.
- (9) Be familiar with picture books and stories, listening with interest, enjoying using their imagination.
- (10) Experience the enjoyment of conveying thoughts and feelings in writing in everyday life.

3 Utilization of Content

It is necessary to note the following points with regard to dealing with content related to health.

- (1) Considering the fact that people are able to acquire language gradually through interacting, conveying their emotions and intentions, and listening to the responses of others, children should be encouraged to experience and enjoy exchanging words in their relationships with teachers and other children.
- (2) Teachers should gradually foster in children the ability to understand what people are saying and to communicate in words, by encouraging children to communicate their own thoughts in words and to listen to what teachers and other children are saying with interest and attention.
- (3) Teachers should encourage children to create rich images and develop an understanding of language by allowing them to fully experience the joy of relating the picture books, stories, etc., to their own experiences, using their imagination and creativity.
- (4) Help infants experience the sounds and rhythms of words, new words and expressions, and enjoy using them in their daily lives. At that time, make the words rich by familiarizing yourself with picture books and stories and playing with words.
- (5) Teachers should encourage children to experience the pleasure and enjoyment of conveying thoughts and feelings through written words, and to develop an interest in and curiosity about written words in their everyday life.

Expression

"Develop rich feelings and the ability to express oneself, and enhancing creativity by expressing experiences and thoughts in their own words."

1 Objectives

- (1) To develop a deep sense of the beauty and other qualities of various things.
- (2) To enjoy expressing feelings and thoughts in their own way.
- (3) To enjoy various ways of self-expression throughout the day using rich imagery.

2 Content

- (1) Enjoy recognizing and feeling various sounds, colors, forms, textures, and movements throughout

the day.

- (2) Come into contact with beauty and things that move people emotionally, and creating rich images.
- (3) Enjoy communicating emotional responses to various events.
- (4) Express feelings and thoughts using media such as sound and movement, drawing, painting, and free expression.
- (5) Be familiar with various materials and making use of them creatively in play.
- (6) Be familiar with music, and enjoying singing, using simple rhythmical instruments, etc.
- (7) Enjoy drawing, painting, and creating things, and using them for play, as decorations, etc.
- (8) Enjoy expressing, performing, and playing with their own images through words and movement.

3 Utilization of Content

It is necessary to note the following points with regard to dealing with content related to health.

- (1) Children's rich feelings should be fostered through encounters with beautiful, excellent and moving things during deep interaction with their surrounding environment, as well as by sharing and expressing their impressions of the experience with other children and teachers in various ways.
- (2) As children often express themselves in a simple manner, teachers should encourage them to enjoy expressing themselves in various childlike ways by being receptive to this kind of expression and by acknowledging the willingness of the children to express themselves.
- (3) For children to enjoy expressing themselves in various ways and to exercise fully their intention to express themselves in a way that is appropriate to their experiences and stage of development, teachers should come up with creative ways to encourage children to enjoy expressing themselves by placing importance on the process of expression and giving the children play equipment and apparatus, help them become familiar with various materials and ways to express themselves, as well as providing opportunities for them to listen to other children expressing themselves.

Chapter 3 Points to Note Regarding Educational Activities Performed After the End of the Regular Educational Day, etc.

1 Regarding educational activities conducted for those who wish them after the end of the regular educational time involving the curriculum, etc., according to the actual conditions of the region or guardians' requests, take into consideration the burdens on the minds and bodies of the children. Heed the following points as well:

- (1) Regarding basic curriculum activities, they should be appropriate and not unreasonable for the period of young childhood. Plan for close cooperation with the teachers in charge of the basic curriculum activities.
- (2) Take into consideration childhood life in the home and community when drawing up plans for educational activities conducted after the end of the regular school day, etc. Utilize various resources of the region and enable various personal experiences.
- (3) Aim at close cooperation with the home. Enable the increase in guardians' consciousnesses that they are bringing up children in cooperation with the kindergarten, by preparing opportunities for information exchanges, etc.
- (4) Consider flexible application, for example, about the enforcement of number of days and hours, etc., through appraisal of the rhythms of the life of small children, the actual conditions of the area, and the circumstances of guardians.
- (5) Be sure to have appropriate duty of responsibility and guidance systems in place.

2 Concerning the operation of the kindergarten, make efforts so that it fulfills the role of a center of childhood education in the area or region, with its functions and facilities open to guardians and local people for the support of raising children, and with consideration for cooperation and collaboration of the completion of the organization and related facilities and mechanisms within the kindergarten,

discuss and consult about childhood education, offer information, receive guardians and children at the kindergarten, and in order to promote efforts related to infants, accommodate opportunities for meetings with guardians, etc. At that time, consideration shall be given to working in cooperation with psychological and health specialists, local child-rearing experienced persons, etc.