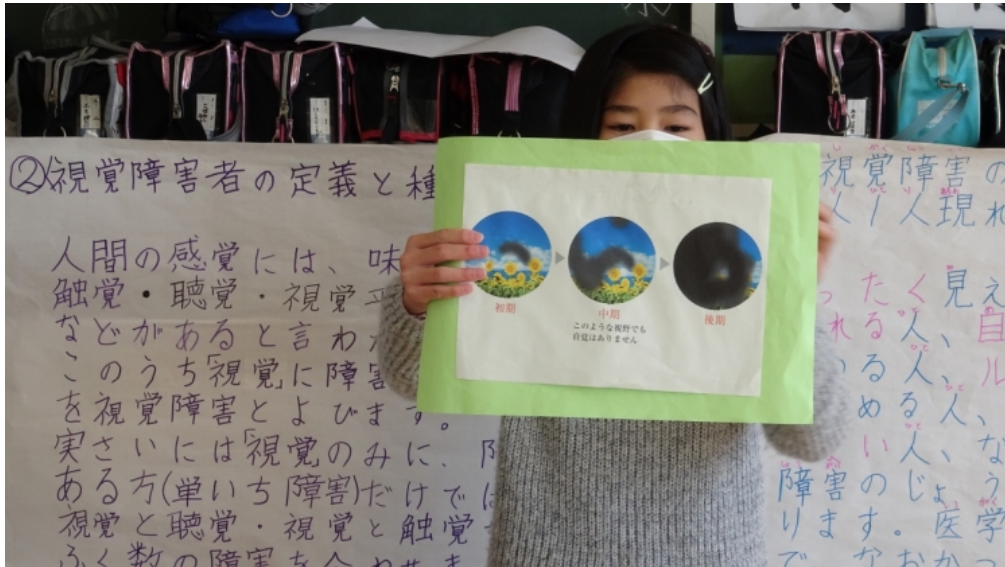



News and staff stories »

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Sustainable Development Goals and primary education in Japan



 UNIC Tokyo was at the open class day at Yanagawa Elementary School (Photo: UNIC Tokyo)



"The face of every child shining with the joy of learning we see here today is nothing less than a true testament that the vision of the 2030 Agenda and the SDGs is effective for primary education."

On 27 January, over 100 elementary school teachers from across Japan gathered together at Yanagawa Elementary School in Koto Ward, Tokyo to learn about the best practices for teaching the SDGs.

The school is one of the twelve recipients of the first Japan SDGs Award. It was also designated by the Education Board of Tokyo Metropolitan Government as the model school for building a sustainable society.

Soon after the adoption of the SDGs, the school incorporated the Global Goals into the cross-cutting educational curriculum that it had developed. It is based on the concept of Education for Sustainable Development as articulated by the UNESCO Schools in Japan.

According to the Principal Toshio Tejima, this educational approach has generated positive change in the children's sense of self-confidence and respect for others. They have shown great improvement in the national academic achievement survey, although the school has never put a narrow focus on improving children's academic scores.

The annual event started with the Yanagawa Festival, or open class day. Every student made a presentation in their classroom. For parents and people in the community, it was a joyful opportunity to visit the school to see how their children are learning.

On the walls of the classrooms, the icons of the SDGs were hung alongside the themes they studied so that the children could see their connections with SDGs. Parents could envision the world in 2030 through the eyes of their children. The visitors were encouraged to participate in class activities and to interact with the children making presentations in small groups.

Speaking at the opening of the afternoon session, a staff member from the United Nations Information Centre (UNIC) Tokyo, who participated in the event, encouraged the teachers to keep on exploring the best practices.

"The face of every child shining with the joy of learning we see here today is nothing less than a true testament that the vision of the 2030 Agenda and the SDGs is effective for primary education," said Kiyoshi Chiba, Knowledge Management Assistant.



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