



Aim for the Southern Cross!

A school filled with smile and happiness

School News

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The Japanese School of Johannesburg

Successfully finished this year's final international exchange! Looking forward to next year as well

The international exchange activities at the Johannesburg Japanese School successfully concluded for this school year with our sixth and final exchange, held on January 30th, with the residents of Elm Park Retirement Village. This year's program began with exchanges involving early childhood facilities and local schools. Through encounters with people of different generations and backgrounds, the children greatly expanded their learning. Ending the program with an exchange with senior citizens was especially meaningful.



During the exchange with the elderly residents, the children were required not only to express themselves accurately in English, but also to show consideration for others and to communicate in a clear and respectful manner. They performed the song "Country Roads" in both Japanese and English and introduced aspects of Japanese culture such as origami and hand-play games, adjusting their tones of voice and speaking pace to help themselves to be understood. Even when they struggled to communicate, they did not give

up—instead, they tried different ways to convey their message. Their efforts showed clear growth that goes beyond what can be learned in the classroom.

Throughout the exchange, many senior residents listened attentively to the children's words and activities, responding with warm smiles. This intergenerational interaction gave the children great encouragement and offered them a valuable opportunity to experience firsthand how their actions can bring joy to others. In the post-exchange reflection, each learner shared individual thoughts, speaking not only about the challenges they faced during preparation but also about the sense of accomplishment and fulfillment they gained.



Plans for next year's intercultural exchange with partner schools and organisations are already underway, and many children are excited about the possibility of meeting their counterparts again in the coming year.

Opportunities for overseas Japanese schools to engage in international exchange with local elderly care facilities are quite rare. Through this experience, the children developed not only their language skills but also a sense of respect for others and an openness to diverse values. We hope that this meaningful experience will become a valuable foundation for their future school life and beyond. Carrying with them the warmth of this year's exchanges, the children are already taking their first steps toward next year's international exchange activities.

