

Taking the Next Step

Grade 6 Teacher Hideko Teramoto

In April 2011, fifteen students entered our school, and as that number has grown to thirty-eight, the classroom feels a bit cramped these days. Despite the class having its various factions, when it comes to getting things done, the students are quick to come together and accomplish their goals. It is this class, 6-1, which will soon graduate.

The school has grown from a small school to an intermediately sized one, and these students have been witnesses to that process. In its smaller days the school was like one big family, and it was good. The start of the International Program brought students from many countries around the world which caused the school to grow, and it was also good. They had the benefit of both experiences, and they loved both periods of those times at Higashimachi.

I have been charged with the care of these students for both 5th and 6th grades. During their 5th grade year, there were times when it was necessary for these students to assist the 6th grade students with their duties as the highest grade, due to the 6th graders relatively small class last year.

Thus, they became 6th graders, and with their likes and dislikes aside, it was as if they wished for me to be some kind of leader. With slogans of "responsibility" and "positivity," the students took on their role as leaders of the school with vigor and enthusiasm. This is not to say that every student would always listen to their instructions, but even towards those who would not listen at first, grade 6 would persuade them with patience and kindness. At school events, the sixth graders have many times lent a hand with various preparations. Despite frequent protests, they would always see the work through to the very end.

As the school's representatives, the students participated in the swim meet and the city-wide sports day. Despite having respectable personal records, when matched against other schools in the relay, Higashimachi has not been able to produce the same results. Now that the school has grown, with more students participating, Higashimachi can stand shoulder to shoulder with other schools and have a fighting chance in the relay and other competitions.

Without a doubt, the most profoundly memorable experience of the year was the Nikko trip at the beginning of winter. At every turn there was knowledge to gain and fun to be had. The students were filled with a sense of gratitude, as all of this was made possible by the kindness of the people encountered along the way. While it is unfortunate that they were unable to visit Hakone as 5th and 6th graders, instead they gained a different kind of valuable experience.

The 100-day calendar made by the students that is hanging in the classroom has only 18 days remaining. With no regrets, we want to appreciate the value of each and every remaining day, one by one.

Thus, the students can look forward to an excellent graduation ceremony, and confidently stride into a new world known as junior high school.



First Grade

Grade 1 Teachers Naoko Kashima
Naoko Murakami
Erika Kobayashi

On the day of the entrance ceremony, the first grade students held tight to the hands of their families as they entered the school's gate. Since then, they have had a wealth of experiences, and little by little they have grown into vibrant and considerate youths. Recently, it feels like the *randoseru*, which seemed so large at the entrance ceremony, are now right at home on the shoulders of the students.

The students' time together as 1st graders is growing short, and so we want to wrap up their studies in order to give them the confidence they need to start their next journey in the new school year.

Brand new textbooks!



Everyone was nervous!



Everyone's getting along!



The Art Exhibit

Everyone's parfait looks delicious!



Sekisyokai

They wrote each Character so carefully.

