

Educational exchange program using Geopark network

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Oita Himeshima and Oita Bungoono Geoparks have carried out educational exchange for elementary school children and junior high school students in every summer. Outline, results and future tasks of this educational exchange program are introduced in this presentation.

Educational exchange between the Geoparks in Oita prefecture has been conducted every year since 2013. Third times of educational exchange for elementary school children was carried out in summer of 2015. The objective of this exchange program is that the children understand both regions through learning about local resources and visiting each other's area during the summer vacation. Learning process of educational exchange is as follows. First, children learn about their region and prepare for presentation to introduce their own region before the exchange in summer vacation. Then, on the day of exchange, children introduce their region and guide in Geosites for visitors. After the exchange, children review and summarize the learned content, and present the results at such as meeting or symposium. Children can be recognized the "difference" strongly from the comparison between the areas where they live and the other through this process, which resulted in discovery of regional charm. In addition, the experience of presentation to public audience cultivates consciousness of children to disseminate the charm of the region. Furthermore, formation of new connection between the two regions made the effect of expanding the network of people. Educational exchange with the Geopark outside of Oita Prefecture was carried out for the first time in 2015. Elementary school children and junior high school students in Oita Himeshima, Oita Bungoono and Kirishima Geoparks carried out the educational exchange in Kirishima Geopark. Since the moving distance is long, this attempt needs further improvement at the point of time consuming. Pre- and post-learning are important for learning effectively in limited time of exchange at distant place.

Keywords: Oita Himeshima Geopark, Oita Bungoono Geopark, Kirishima Geopark, Himeshima elementary school, Sugao elementary school