

## BANDAI to Enter Chinese Baby Toy Market



New brand to feature characters from  
*the bears' school* picture book series

### “the bears’ school baby”

Playmats, rattles and more available starting March 2019

BANDAI CO., LTD. (President & CEO: Masaru Kawaguchi, Head Office: Taito-ku, Tokyo), announces the upcoming launch in March 2019 of “the bears’ school baby,” a new brand of baby toys, based in China, featuring characters from the popular *the bears’ school* picture books series, which is now being marketed in six countries and regions around the world. The launch marks BANDAI’s official entry into the Chinese baby toy market.

The new brand will develop baby toys aimed at children aged three and under. In 2017, the Chinese market for maternity and baby products was worth 42.8 trillion yen\* (an increase of 16% from 2016), or roughly eleven times the size of the same market in Japan. Of this total, baby toy sales in China accounted for 4.6 trillion yen. It is with a view to capturing a large share of this market that the new brand is being launched using characters from the popular *the bears’ school* picture books series, which has already been released in China. To break into China’s huge market, BANDAI will leverage its accumulated know-how in character product planning and proven track record of creating safe, reliable, and high-quality products.

In China, character-based toys account for only about 1.5% of the total market for baby toys. The new brand is expected to further stimulate growth in the Chinese baby toy market by helping to popularize character-based baby toys among Chinese consumers. The brand has a goal of approximately 1.5 billion yen in cumulative sales by March 2020 and plans to expand its lineup of product offerings moving forward.

\* According to the National Bureau of Statistics of China



Partial product line-up

#### About the bears’ school

The first installment in the popular *the bears’ school* picture book series (story by Hiroyuki Aihara, pictures by Nami Adachi) was released in Japan by Bronze Publishing Inc. in 2002. Since then, the series has grown to include 21 books and has sold a total of more than 2.2 million copies in Japan. The series has also been translated into multiple languages and has a steadily growing readership around the world, notably in China, Taiwan, and Korea. In addition, a wide variety of tie-in merchandise is being developed that includes stationery, apparel, cosmetics, household items, and even food. This, as well events such as exhibitions of original artwork from the series, is earning *the bears’ school* and its characters a broad and devoted fan base ranging from children to adults.

#### Event Information

“the bears’ school baby” brand will receive its official launch in Shanghai from July 25<sup>th</sup> to 27<sup>th</sup> at CBME China 2018, the world’s largest trade fair for the maternity, baby, and children’s products and services industry.

Official website: <http://www.cbmexpo.com/en/>

“the bears’ school baby” website (Chinese) : <http://www.bandai-qimeng.com>

BANDAI website (English): <http://www.bandai.co.jp/e/>

Note: Information in this press release is current as of July 23, 2018 and is subject to change without prior notice.