Dear parents and caregivers,

We are about to start a new unit in science in which we will be exploring animal growth and changes. Through a variety of hands-on activities and investigations, your child will be learning about the life cycles of various animals, including mammals, birds, fish, amphibians, reptiles, and insects.

You can talk to your child at home about his or her own growth and development. Look at family pictures together and talk about how your child has changed over time. Talk about how you cared for your child as a baby, and at what stages he or she learned to do different things such as eat independently, sit up, walk, talk, read, ride a bicycle, etc. If your child has a younger or older sibling at home, you can talk about physical differences, such as height and shoe size, and also talk about different things that the siblings are able to do because of their different ages.

You can plan some activities with your child to focus on growth and development, for example:

- If you have a dog (or other pet) that you acquired when it was a puppy, use photographs and memories to discuss the growth and change of your pet, including its physical characteristics and its behaviour.
- Look for examples of different stages of animal life cycles when out in nature, such as bird eggs, molting insects, or butterfly caterpillars or chrysalises.
- Begin (or continue) a growth chart in your home to record your child's height as he or she grows, along with the height of other family members.
- Ask an older relative such as a grandparent about the changes that happen with aging.
- Visit a friend or relative with a baby so your child can observe how babies look, how they behave, and what they need from their caregivers.

To ensure a wide range of experiences and make connections between this topic and your child's world, he/she may choose to bring one or more personal items to school for exploration during in-class activities. These items will be returned home once explorations are completed. To determine whether the item(s) is appropriate please contact me, your child's teacher.

Sincerely,