

Principal's Message: Small Gestures that Make a Family...

I walked past a colleague and was intrigued by the box he was carrying. It was heaped high with meticulously cut square pieces of cardboard. "It's for the exams," he explained, "to stabilise uneven tables so that our students can do their papers more comfortably."

I visited a boarder who was down with chicken pox at our medical centre. I asked him how he was managing with food. "My friends bring me dinner from the boarding school in the evening and the Matron buys me lunch each day from the school canteen." He also told me that the Matron updated his parents and teachers on his condition daily.

Our school philosophy states that "at its heart, the school is a family and a community."

A canteen vendor in the school passed away after a short illness during the school holiday. On hearing the news, a group of students emailed me their plan to collect messages of condolences from staff and students which they would like to hand over to the family to encourage them at their time of grief and loss.

Walking into the school office, I encountered an animated group of Year 1 students. They had brought their friend to the office as he had a fall while playing. The young gentleman was in some pain, and his knee was bruised and bleeding. The friends tried to lighten the mood by telling him the lamest of jokes. Within minutes, their teacher was there, gently reassuring the boy, while attending to his wound.

These represent just a fraction of the incidents that I personally know about. I believe there are many other such small and thoughtful gestures that take place among students, teachers, parents and the wider ACS community on a daily basis.

Small gestures, deep impact.

Our school philosophy states that "at its heart, the school is a family and a community." It is where each faithfully uses whatever gifts he or she has received to serve others. Critically, school is where staff, students and the school family can experience the reality of God's love and forgiveness, support and strength through our interactions with one another.

This aspect of our school philosophy will remain an inspiring but lofty aspiration if it is not made real in the lives of ACSians. But as some of the examples I have shared indicate, the spirit of family and community is very much alive in our school. It is demonstrated not always by grand or bold overtures but by the many heart-warming, kind and often small actions quietly undertaken by members of the school family because they care for others around them - and have the courage and thoughtfulness to do something about it.

Small gestures. We can all make them happen



Winston Hodge
Principal
Anglo-Chinese School (Independent)